Lutheran Teacher-Training Series

for the Sunday School

BOOK FOUR

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILD-NURTURE

ARTHUR H. SMITH, D.D.

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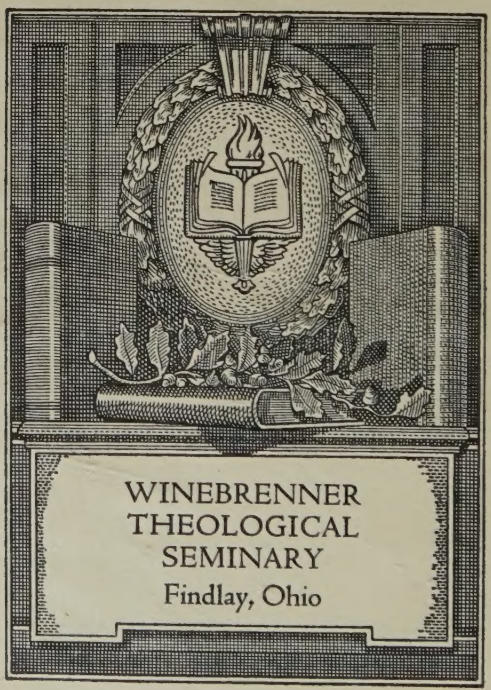

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Lutheran Teacher-Training Series

FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF THE LUTHERAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY

BOOK FOUR

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND CHILD-NURTURE

By Arthur H. Smith, D. D.

THE LUTHERAN PUBLICATION SOCIETY
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

It is with a sense of satisfaction that we present this series of Sunday School Teacher-Training handbooks. Their preparation has been in response to a frequently expressed desire on the part of many of our pastors and teachers. The committee has felt the difficulty of the task and the many conditions to be met. Much consideration has been given to the work, and not a little revision has been found necessary. To enter a field already largely occupied and vindicate our claim that such a series is needed, is no small task. These books have been made, not because there are not already many excellent books on teacher-training, but because none of them covers all the ground we deem requisite. Nothing needs to be more carefully guarded than the character of the literature we give to our Sunday schools. Especially is this true of the helps for the study and teaching of God's word. We lay emphasis upon child-nurture from the viewpoint of our Church s teaching, that baptized children are members of the Church of Christ. The responsibility of the Sunday school in teaching the child is the responsibility of the Church. The teacher, therefore, should know not only his Bible and its message, not only the laws of child-thought and the best methods of influencing the unfolding soul, but he should know what his Church stands for and what it teaches. With this conception of our responsibility we have chosen the subjects and the writers. The work speaks for itself. We believe it will be found adapted to the better equipment of our Lutheran teachers. The series consists of four books, as follows: "The Book and the Message," "The Pupil and the Teaching," "The School and the Church" and "The Lutheran Church and Child-Nurture." The aim of these books is to furnish the teachers and officers of our Sunday school with a working knowledge of the Bible as a book and as the message of

God to men; of the personality of the pupils, and the principles and methods to be applied in teaching them; of the organization, aim and work of the Sunday school, and of our Lutheran views of the child's relation to the Church.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LITERATURE COMMITTEE.

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PART ONE

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Lutheran Teacher-Training Series

PART I

The Lutheran Church

LESSON I

The Lutheran Church and the Child

1. **Child-nurture.** There never was a time when so many people were students of child-life and culture as to-day. They are giving serious investigation to the problems of child-psychology, the first principles of general education, and the foundations of religious culture in the child's early years. Their aim is to secure the best working methods for the best training of the child in every proper sphere touched by the expanding mind and heart. The most significant fact, however, is that the most thoughtful men and women, whether educators or not, are seeing more clearly that the intellect is not all of man and that soul-culture should have the primacy over intellectual culture in the unfolding years of the child-mind. These are the strategic years of life, for "the boy is father to the man."

It is this perception of the importance of the religious nurture of the child that is responsible for the great interest now taken in teacher-training work in our Sunday schools. The responsibility of the Sunday school teacher's work is recognized as never before, as being so great, that none but those trained in some measure by child-study and the study of the subject-matter and methods of Christian teaching, are to be considered as properly qualified to have in their care the culture of young immortal souls.

2. **The child's faculty for spiritual knowledge.** The child has a capacity for Christian nurture and is receptive to Christian truth. We may recognize a philosophical and theological distinction between soul and spirit; but, practically, "the soul is a unit: the spiritual

nature is simply the mind occupied with spiritual things."—*Professor Coe.* If this be true, the child may be expected to apprehend religious facts and truth just as readily as the knowledge of the natural world and material things, if not more so. And, indeed, the child in the earliest years shows an aptitude for the simplest and elemental religious principles, and ponders them to a degree far more than most people give him credit for. They make a mistake who think that Christian doctrine is too difficult for children. Every pastor who has had experience with catechetical classes will testify to this.

"When," says Professor Coe, "education is taken in the profound sense of bringing to expression that which is deepest and most real in man, then it becomes a means of making him conscious of God, in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being." There is born in the child the faculty of God-consciousness, and it is a mark of the divine image in man. This consciousness of God must be awakened and drawn out into the apprehension of spiritual truth. It is impossible to begin this education too early. Jesus recognized clearly these spontaneous intuitions of God in the unfolding soul; intuitions which are human indeed, but with a divine motive force behind them. This was the reason He chose a little child as a concrete illustration of His kingdom, and on another occasion took the little children in His arms and blessed them, and it is the reason of His words, "Of such is the kingdom of God."

3. **The necessity of religious culture.** Important as the orderly development of the child's intellectual and æsthetic faculties may be, the necessity is greater for the progressive culture of his religious nature. The first concern of the educational world is now with the former, but, surely, the first concern of the Church—of parents, teachers and pastors—must be with the latter. This necessity arises from "the mysterious and baffling dualism of human nature, its tendency to sin and its faculty for holiness," in explanation of which, Dr. George Matheson endeavors to show "from the story of Adam that every child begins the world with an important capital, a long strain of heredity," "a bias from earth and a bias from heaven," "dust and the Father's breath." The two sides of this dualism will never be evenly balanced. One or the other will become the controlling power and directive influence in the child's life and will make the man. Which shall it be?

On the one hand there is the inborn tendency to sin which we call *natural depravity* or *original sin.* Let this alone and unrestrained and it leads the child into a sinful life, without God and without hope.

Dr. Gerberding remarks truly:* "Let the child alone and without a teacher, and it will learn to lie, deceive, steal, curse, give pain to others, etc. It will not learn to pray, confess wrong, and 'fear, love and trust in God above all things.'" Hence, emphatically, the child needs that positive spiritual training, that religious care, which will awaken the faculty of God-consciousness and develop it to the controlling place in the child's life, leading him step by step into an increasing understanding of spiritual truth and a noble Christian faith and life.

4. **The child's need—salvation.** Earnestly alive to the facts and principles stated above, the Lutheran Church has always shown an active concern for the spiritual nurture of her children, and this has been one of the secrets of her strength. She has promptly recognized the fact that children are sinners, and therefore need divine grace and salvation. The Lutheran faith has never been perverted to either of the mistaken views which have had wide acceptance—the one, that the child is by nature good and without sin, and will be safe if he can be prevented later from turning into ways of sin; the other, which views the child as lost, and that he should be left to grow up to years of discretion, when special religious pressure may be applied to lead to his conversion and bring him to Christ.

On the contrary, the Lutheran Church has held firmly to the doctrine of original sin, *i. e.*, that "all men are born in sin." They are born with inherited depravity or disposition to sin. Thus the Augsburg Confession declares (Art. 2), "Since the fall of Adam, all men who are naturally engendered, are born with sin, that is, without the fear of God or confidence towards Him, and with sinful propensities"; and the Formula of Concord (Chap. I.), states, "Original sin is not a slight, but a deep corruption of human nature." This is the teaching of the Scriptures. (John 3:6; Rom. 5:12, 14; Eph. 2:3; Ps. 51:5.)

As they enter life with an inherited sinful nature, the children are subjects of salvation. They should be reached by saving grace, therefore, and be brought into the way of the kingdom.

5. **The duty of the Church.** This is clear. The Church must open the way of salvation to the child. As she is the divinely-instituted steward of the means of grace, it is her duty to give them not only to those of mature years and experience, but to the children of believers as well, and, indeed, to all children. Christ gave His tenderest love to the little ones. (Matt. 19:13-15.) Of Him it was prophesied that He would "gather the lambs in His arms and carry them in His bosom." He declared that it is not His or His Father's

* "Way of Salvation," p. 17.

will "that one of them should perish," and laid the command on Peter, "Feed my lambs."

Believing that *the children are included* in the scope of the great commission and in that of our Lord's saving grace, the Lutheran Church feels a deep responsibility towards them. She holds that they are capable of being influenced by the regenerating power of the Spirit of God, and that it is a mistake to wait for the age of discretion or some degree of maturity before bringing the gospel to bear. The Church, therefore, is in duty bound to instruct, influence and train the children in the Christian faith, and the first step is the baptism of the infant.

The baptized children of believing parents now stand in a *definite relation to the Church.* They are members of the Church and of the kingdom, and are in covenant relation with God. The child that is in the Church through baptism should be brought up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," both by the parents and by the Church. The Lutheran Church claims the children for Christ, therefore, as being in covenant relationship, and with prayerful diligence seeks to give them the fullest possible measure of Christian training, never losing sight of the fact that the Holy Spirit alone can give the needed illumination and grace. Our Church has conceived her duty aright.

6. **The strategic years.** The Lutheran Church has always appreciated the fact, as all churches now realize it, that childhood is the time of vital opportunity. Here are the strategic years of a man's life, even more than those of the period of adolescence or youth. In the latter period the element of will-power becomes active in forming choices and decisions, but these choices are very largely determined by the bent given by the years of childhood. The opening mind of the child is especially susceptible to impressions, good or evil. Indeed, from infancy onward he is continually receiving impressions and forming ideas whose influence will never be lost and whose molding power upon life and character will be very great.

It is supremely important that these *earliest directive impulses* and teachings should be thoroughly Christian and that the child's thoughts and affections should be directed and centered in Jesus. He may be (and should be) given such religious nurture that he will grow into the love, faith and service of Christ without those violent changes still deemed necessary by some. Our Church believes that the children should not be treated as outside the pale of the Church, but as Christians already; and by wise instruction they should be led into the consciousness of God and to give their love to Jesus.

There is *no need* that our children of the Church should ever experience actual estrangement from God if properly nurtured. Professor Van Ormer, in his thoughtful "Studies in Child Culture," quotes from Kate Douglas Wiggin in presenting the above truth: "To become sensible of oneness with the divine heart before any sense of separation has been felt, this is surely the most beautiful way for a child to find God." And also from Professor Coe: "Some, who should be accounted the happiest of all, have never known a negative period. Taught from infancy to count themselves the Lord's, they have never had any other fundamental preference." The years of childhood present the strategic opportunity when parents first, and then parents and church teachers working together, may so direct the children that their "fundamental preference" may always be a preference for Christ.

7. **Who shall give this nurture?**

(*a*) **The training of the child** in the way of the Lord is the supreme task and privilege of the Christian father and mother, by the natural right of parenthood. It is their sacred obligation, because they stand in the closest relation to the child, the latter being "flesh of their flesh." Moreover, they possess daily and hourly opportunities for the spiritual nurture of their child such as no others can have. They are unworthy of parenthood who would shift the privilege and obligation upon others.

(*b*) **Sunday school teachers** have as their special work that of the religious nurture of the children in the Bible school of the church. They have exceptionally fruitful opportunities every week to impress religious truth upon the opening and impressionable souls in their classes. If they are in earnest, consecrated, wise in action, and spiritually and intellectually qualified, they will not fail to influence mightily those young hearts for Christian faith and service.

(*c*) **The pastor,** while not having the frequent opportunities of the former, yet is a factor of great importance in the Christian nurture of the children of the church. By reason of his sacred office his pastoral admonitions and instructions come with weight to the childish mind and enlist his respect and confidence. The child is quick to respond to the wise and faithful pastor as he brings the gospel in its simplicity and tenderness. But his special opportunity is in the catechetical class, where the plastic minds may be as clay in the hands of the potter and where the most effective Christian culture may be given. Of catechetical instruction we shall speak later.

8. **The scope of the nurture provided for the child.** The re-

ligious training provided for the child should consist—(1) of direct instruction; (2) of opportunities for Christian work and service; (3) of the spiritual influence of the church and of the godly personal example of believers. The third is of very great importance, but is beyond the scope of our present discussion; the second will receive attention later in this volume; the first, of primary importance, furnishes the chief motive for this text-book.

The **religious instruction** provided for the children of the church should cover:

(*a*) **The history of our own Church.** It is needful that our children and youth should become not only loyal Christians, but also loyal denominationalists—*i. e.*, Lutherans. For this end a knowledge of the character and history of the Church is necessary. Therefore, religious nurture should include the history of our own Church and a knowledge of its character and work; and for this reason we devote Part I. to Lutheran Church History.

(*b*) **The field of Christian doctrine and the means of grace.** The Lutheran Church is convinced of the value of careful indoctrination and attention to the means of grace, for thus only will the child become firmly anchored in the Christian faith and continue a loyal follower of Christ. Hence, the second part of this volume deals with the means of grace (including related subjects), into the faithful use of which the child should be led.

(*c*) **The Christian life and its duties.** The believer's covenant relation with God reaches beyond the question of saving faith and touches his daily life and conduct. The gospel lays upon the Christian corresponding obligations and duties which must not be neglected, and in which the child should have instruction. The great ethical principles of Christianity also must be most carefully instilled in the expanding heart. Therefore the third part of our study will be given to things practical in Christian life and service.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of those interested in child-culture?
2. Are little children capable of religious nurture?
3. What was Christ's attitude to the children?
4. Why is there necessity for early religious culture?
5. What is the result of the inborn tendency to sin if the child is left alone without instruction or restraint?

6. Does the little child need salvation? Why?

7. What is the doctrine of original sin?

8. What is the relation of the baptized children to the Church?

9. What does the Lutheran Church conceive to be our duty to them?

10. What is meant by the "strategic years" for Christian nurture?

11. Can a child be trained to Christian faith and life without the experience of estrangement from God?

12. What is the "fundamental preference" of a Christian?

13. Who should give this religious nurture to the child?

14. What opportunity do Sunday school teachers have?

15. What fields of instruction should be covered by religious nurture?

LESSON II

Outline History of the Christian Church

The Christian Church is the whole body of true believers, "in which the gospel is correctly taught and the sacraments properly administered." Its mission is to preserve, transmit and proclaim the gospel of salvation unto the evangelization of the world. Its history is the record of its growth, victories, doctrines and life.

The Church had its beginning in the person and work of Jesus Christ, and in the small body of disciples whom He trained for their future service. Its real history, however, as an organized, aggressive force of spiritual and saving power, dates from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 30—the "birthday of the Church."

I. The early Church. A. D. 30 to Gregory the Great, A. D. 590.

(1) **The apostolic age.** A. D. 30-100. From Pentecost the Church was established in Jerusalem and grew. Driven out and scattered by severe persecution, the apostles and their converts carried the new faith wherever they went, until in the course of the century it penetrated eastward to Persia and India, southwestward into Africa, and northwestward to the countries of Europe.

Paul was the greatest of the apostles, making effective missionary journeys through Asia Minor and then Europe, probably as far as to Gaul and Spain. Small Christian communities sprang up in most of the towns of the Roman Empire.

The siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Titus occurred in the year 70. The death of St. John, about A. D. 100, closed the age of the apostles.

(2) **The struggle for existence.** John to Constantine, A. D. 100-323. This was the period of Christianity's conflict with the paganism of the Roman Empire. The Church suffered cruelly under not less than ten severe persecutions. The persecutions were intended to destroy the Christian religion, but instead were the principal cause of its spread. It reached far to the east, through all of North Africa, and into Gaul and Britain.

With the final triumph of Constantine in 323 A. D., who then became emperor of a united empire, Christianity also triumphed, and was recognized in the Roman world.

Eminent "Church Fathers" of this period were Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Origen, Tertullian, besides others. The organization of the churches was developing under "bishops," "presbyters," or "elders." The bishop of the congregations in Rome, the imperial capital, was coming to be recognized as of superior rank.

(3) **The era of expansion.** Constantine to Gregory the Great. A. D. 323-590. With the overthrow of Julian in 363, the last opposition of heathenism vanished and the Church was free to expand. During Constantine's reign the gospel was carried into Abyssinia, and thence into Ethiopia and Nubia. Missionaries continued to go into the far east. Bishop Ulphilas in the fourth century labored among the Goths of the Black Sea. Others preached among the Germanic tribes, though the Christianizing of the Teutonic nations was not completed until Winfred, or St. Boniface, in the eighth century. The gospel was given to Ireland by St. Patrick (d. 493), and to Scotland by St. Columba.

During this period there were many doctrinal controversies and conflicts with forms of heresy or false teaching, and to settle these, five ecumenical councils were held. The first was the Council at Nicæa, in 325 A. D., at which Arius and his teaching, denying the deity of Christ, were rejected, and the influence of Arianism broken. The Nicene Creed was here formulated.

Monasticism took its rise during these centuries, among the hermits or monks, who founded cloisters and eventually organized themselves into orders. The first of the great orders, the Benedictines, was founded by Benedict of Nursia in the year 529.

The papal power now gradually takes form. Leo the Great (A. D. 440-461) may be regarded as the founder of the Roman papacy, the bishops of Rome claiming primacy and authority over all others. Worship became more elaborate and the celibacy of the clergy was asserted and practiced.

Great theological leaders of the Church were Athanasius, Ambrose, John Chrysostom (the "golden-mouthed"), and especially St. Augustine (A. D. 354-430).

II. The mediæval Church.

(1) **First period.** Gregory the Great to Charlemagne, A. D. 590-800. Under Gregory I., a Benedictine monk who was raised to the papal chair in A. D. 590, the papal power and authority were firmly established in the western empire. The historian, Kurtz, characterizes him as "the greatest, most capable, noblest, most pious and most

superstitious in the whole long series of popes." He developed the field of church music and manifested great missionary zeal. Britain was evangelized.

This period was marked by the rise of the hostile power of Mohammedanism, dating from Mohammed's flight to Medina in A. D. 622. In the struggle following, Christianity lost Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Persia and North Africa, while the Saracen power swept over Spain and southern Gaul until finally arrested by Charles Martel at the battle of Tours, in A. D. 732. Christianity in Europe was saved.

(2) **Second period.** Charlemagne to Gregory VII., A. D. 800-1073. Charles the Great was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire by Pope Leo III., in A. D. 800. Charles and his successors became the political heads of Christendom and its protectors.

This was a period of spiritual decline. The state of religion among the people was low, the moral character of the clergy was bad, and many of the popes very wicked, while the age was crude. The tenth century especially is known as "the dark century," because of its confusion and strife, its low morals, and scarcity of writers and men of learning. The chief spiritual life was shown in the Christianizing of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Hungary and Russia, with northern Germany.

The final separation between the Eastern and Western Churches took place in 1054, the Patriarch of Constantinople and the eastern bishoprics refusing to acknowledge the authority of Rome.

(3) **Third period.** Gregory VII. to Boniface VIII., A. D. 1073-1294. Hildebrand, Gregory VII., a great pope, accomplished important reforms (1073-1085), including those directed against simony and the gross immorality which was too prevalent. Under him, and later, under Innocent III., the papacy reached its climax of power and glory. Temporal power was claimed and Hildebrand humbled the Emperor Henry IV. at Canossa.

This was the era of the Crusades, those remarkable efforts of Christian Europe for the recovery of Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Moslems. Jerusalem was taken in 1099 by Godfrey of Bouillon, but retaken in 1187 by the Saracens under Saladin.

The Albigenses and Waldenses sought a purer gospel and purer lives, but suffered terribly by the Inquisition. Great teachers of the period were Bernard of Clairvaux, Abelard, Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas Aquinas and Duns Scotus.

(4) **Fourth period.** Boniface VIII. to the Reformation, A. D. 1294-1517. Boniface VIII. (1297-1303), attempted to maintain the

highest papal claims and power, but Philip of France checked his ambitions, and from his time the decline of the papacy may be reckoned. Under his successor, Clement V., the papal court was moved to Avignon, France, and remained seventy years. On the return to Rome, the great schism followed. The fifteenth century was noted for its wicked popes, notable among them being Sixtus IV. and Alexander VI.

The monastic orders multiplied exceedingly and most of them became rich and corrupt. The Eastern Church, centered at Constantinople, was in a state of spiritual stagnation and was overthrown by the Moslem conquest in 1453.

The age was marked by the assertion of ecclesiastical authority, the invocation of the saints, image and relic worship, and extravagant ceremonial. In the fifteenth century came the Renaissance or "revival of learning." The forerunners of the Reformation will be considered in Lesson III.

QUESTIONS

1. When and how did the Christian Church begin?
2. What main divisions are recognized in church history?
3. Tell something of the apostles, and of Paul especially.
4. What were the nature and effects of the great persecutions?
5. Under what emperor did Christianity triumph?
6. When and why was the Council of Nicæa held?
7. Who were some of the "Church Fathers"?
8. Under what popes did the papal power become established?
9. What progress did the Church make during the era of expansion, and the period following?
10. What was the character of the Middle Ages? The "dark century"?
11. What were the Crusades and their results?
12. What was monasticism?
13. Name some of the great popes.

LESSON III

The Reformation: Causes and Preparation

The Reformation of the sixteenth century was a great spiritual and intellectual movement, protesting against the abuses of doctrine and the usurpation of spiritual authority on the part of the Church of Rome. Preaching a pure gospel, drawn directly from the unfailing fountain of the word of God, the Reformation wrought great and permanent changes in the direction of a more scriptural faith and better Christian life among the clergy and the people.

Professor Philip Schaff, the church historian, rightly calls it "*the turning point of modern history.*" He says:* "The Reformation of the sixteenth century is, next to the introduction of Christianity, the greatest event in history. It marks the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of modern times. Starting from religion, it gave, directly or indirectly, a mighty impulse to every forward movement and made Protestantism the chief propelling force in the history of modern civilization." This movement, however, was not an accident of history or a suddenly aroused outbreak. Its causes were deep-seated in the Church and long in developing, while various preparatory movements had done much to make the work of Luther and his fellow-reformers possible.

I. Causes of the Reformation.

(1) **The secularizing of the Church.** The papacy became secularized in proportion as it asserted the right of temporal power and as its wealth and luxury increased. In addition to their spiritual functions, the popes claimed a temporal authority superior to that of secular rulers, and their ambition was to make themselves supreme masters of the nations of Christendom. The effect was seen in the scheming, trickery and political wire pulling in which they all engaged. In the election of a new pope the political completely overshadowed the spiritual significance. The papacy was changed into a "selfish tyranny, whose yoke became more and more unbearable."

(2) **Abuse and corruption of doctrine.** The minor clergy or priests, following the example of their superiors, despised the study of the Scriptures and gave but little preaching and instruction. Many

*"Church History," Vol. VI., p. 1.

of them never saw a complete copy of the Bible. False teachings, therefore, crept in easily and in abundance. The great gospel truths were obscured. Christ was not presented as a merciful Saviour, but was held up as a stern, relentless judge, afar off and to be feared. Rome taught that God could be approached only through the priests and saints and that the former possessed the power to forgive sins. The saints and the Virgin Mary supplanted Christ.

As to the great **question of salvation**, the Roman Church answered by directing her members to do all that the pope and the priesthood commanded, else they could have no forgiveness of sins or eternal life. Justification by faith was entirely lost to view. Salvation could be secured, not by repentance and faith in Christ, but by deeds, gifts, and the performance of penitential works, such as fasting, scourgings and pilgrimages. They must merit their salvation by their "good works" and be justified by them, and "good works" were to be "measured by quantity rather than quality."

Under these conditions there gradually grew up the shameful *traffic in indulgences* by which the people could purchase pardon for sins by the payment of sums of money graduated by scale according to the nature of the sins committed. The system applied not only to the sins of the living but to those of the dead, not only to the sins of the past but to those expected to be committed. Thus the forgiveness of sins could be bought for a price, and the ignorant and superstitious people poured their money into the papal treasuries.

(3) **The corruption of morals.** It was the natural consequence of these conditions that the life of the priests and people was for the most part very immoral. Most of the monasteries and convents were hotbeds of superstition, idleness and vice. Contemporary writings are full of exposures of the immorality and vulgarity of priests and monks. The popes set the example. "Alexander VI. was a monster of iniquity; Julius II. was a politician and warrior rather than a chief shepherd of souls; and Leo X. took far more interest in the revival of heathen literature and art than in religion, and is said even to have doubted the truth of the gospel history."—*Schaff.*

These causes made the Reformation a necessity. The best and noblest souls of these centuries (for the Lord still had His "seven thousand in Israel"), recoiled from this corruption of doctrine and life in the Roman Church, and their revolt was to be expected.

II. Preparation for the Reformation.

The Reformation was *not a fortuitous event*, but, like other social and moral commotions, was a long time in preparation. "In propor-

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tion to the magnitude of the catastrophe," says Professor Fisher in his admirable volume on the Reformation,* "are the length of time and the variety of agencies which are concerned in producing it."

(1) **General preparation.** The fifteenth century was a part of the transition period from the Middle Ages to modern civilization and the progress of society was marked. The discovery of the art of printing about 1440, and the discovery of America in 1492, with many other inventions and discoveries, assisted to awaken Europe from its torpor.

The Mystics and their contemplative piety, from St. Bernard to John Tauler and his "German Theology," and Thomas à Kempis and his "Imitation of Christ," indirectly prepared the way for the Reformation by turning attention from a religious formality to that which is inward and spiritual. Of special importance was the Renaissance, or "revival of learning," which was given great impetus by the throng of Greek scholars, who came with their literary treasures into western Europe after the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. The Humanism of Italy was semi-pagan in character, but that of Germany was closely coupled with religion.

Among the leaders of the Humanists were Reuchlin and Erasmus, the latter the most finished and versatile scholar in Europe at the opening of the sixteenth century. Both relentlessly exposed the corruptions of Rome in doctrine and life, but never broke with the Church as did Luther.

(2) **Conservative reformers.** There were many conservative reformers who made earnest efforts for the moral cleansing of the papacy, notably at the great councils of Pisa, Constance and Basel, but with little success.

(3) **Radical reformers.** Earliest among these were the Albigenses in southern France and the Waldenses in northern Italy, arising in the twelfth century, sincerely zealous for purity of life and opposing the traditions and authority of the papal hierarchy. They were almost crushed out by persecutions, the cruel inquisition now appearing for the first.

The most remarkable *forerunner of Luther* was John Wiclif (1324-1384), a trained English theologian, who proclaimed boldly his essentially Protestant positions and translated the Bible into the English language. His followers, the Lollards, endured for years amid much persecution.

Among the reformers who arose in Bohemia, John Huss (1369-1415), was the greatest. Influenced by the writings of Wiclif, Huss,

* "The Reformation," p. 1.

with Jerome of Prague, led a reforming movement which spread over all Bohemia, exalting the Scriptures as Luther did later. He was sent to the stake by the Council of Constance in 1415, as was also Jerome a year later. The Hussites were crushed by bloody war.

John Wessel (1420-1489), a teacher of theology at Cologne, Heidelberg and elsewhere, was another forerunner of the Reformation, teaching clearly the doctrine of justification by faith and protesting against the doctrine of the infallibility of bishops and popes. Savonarola (1452-1498), the great Dominican of Florence, with fiery power, rebuked the sins of the Church and people, and for a time purged the city, but finally met a martyr's death. He, too, helped prepare the way for the reformers of the sixteenth century.

"Thus," remarks Professor Fisher, "within the stately and imposing fabric of the ecclesiastical system, there was a force imprisoned, as it were, struggling for freedom, and gradually acquiring strength sufficient to break down the wall that confined it."

QUESTIONS

1. What was the nature of the Reformation?
2. What is its importance in history?
3. State some of the causes of the Reformation.
4. Name some doctrines obscured or corrupted by the Roman Church.
5. What were "indulgences"?
6. What was the state of morals in the Church?
7. What general movements contributed to the Reformation?
8. What was the influence of the revival of learning?
9. Who were the Albigenses and the Waldenses?
10. What was the work of John Wiclif?
11. How did John Huss prepare the way for the Reformation?
12. What was the influence of John Wessel and Savonarola?

LESSON IV

Luther and His Work

The great hero of the Reformation of the sixteenth century unquestionably was **Martin Luther.** The influence of his work assured the success of the other reforming movements which closely followed or paralleled his own, as those of Zwingli and Calvin. Luther was born in Eisleben, Saxony, November 10th, 1483, the son of a humble but pious and industrious miner, Hans Luther, and his wife, Margaret. Six months later the family removed to Mansfeld. His home training was strict and austere, but it was influential in shaping his life and character aright.

1. **Training and preparation.** Luther received his schooling under many adverse circumstances in Mansfeld, then in Magdeburg, and later, at Eisenach, where he was befriended by Ursula Cotta. In 1501, he entered the University of Erfurt, received the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1502, and the degree of Master of Arts in 1505. He was an earnest and promising student, and had the law in view. Several influences contributed to change his course; his deep concern for his personal salvation, the sudden death of a friend, and a severe thunder-storm, in which his life was endangered. In July, 1505, he entered the Augustinian monastery in Erfurt.

It was long before he found the peace of soul for which he sought. In the university library, in 1503, he had found a Bible by which he was much surprised and deeply interested. In the monastery he found another, and, led wisely by the vicar-general, Von Staupitz, and an old monk, he at last laid hold on the truth that we are justified by faith alone, and not by the merit of our works. Meanwhile, in the midst of his monastic austerities, he pursued his studies with great diligence, and in 1508 was called to the professorship of philosophy, and later, of theology, in the Elector's new university at Wittenberg.

He was ordained as priest in 1507, and became a Doctor of Divinity in 1512. In the autumn of 1510, he was sent to Rome on some business connected with the Augustinian order, and there his eyes were opened to the fearful corruption of the papal court and system.

2. **The crisis.** In addition to his teaching duties, Luther was ap-

pointed preacher in the Castle Church at Wittenberg. It was not long until increasing numbers thronged his church, attracted by the new voice, which was like the voice of a new prophet, for he preached the gospel which had brought such peace to his own soul.

The crisis now approached. In order to complete the cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome, Pope Leo X. commanded a general preaching and *sale of indulgences*, reference to which has been made in a previous chapter. Indulgences were pardons of sin, offered in the market for money, by which "the individual received a full discharge from the penalties of sin, or procured the release of a soul from the flames of purgatory."—*Fisher*. John Tetzel, a corrupt Dominican friar, drew near to Wittenberg, offering the indulgences for sale and attracting some of Luther's flock. Luther was stirred with indignation at this gross abuse of Christian truth, and his conscience would not permit him to be silent.

He preached and wrote against the indulgences, and finally, on *October 31st, 1517*, published on the door of the Castle Church a copy of *ninety-five theses* or propositions directed against the abuse in question, and others in addition, which were in the Roman Church. This was the birthday of the Reformation and the Lutheran Church. The theses were printed and quickly carried over all Germany, and in fourteen days reached Rome itself. All Germany was stirred, and her young men flocked to Wittenberg to hear this new champion of a pure gospel.

3. **Progress of the conflict.** Events followed in rapid succession, and Luther found the power of Rome arrayed against him. The noble Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, however, supported and protected him. In 1518, Luther met Cajetan, the Pope's legate, in conference at Augsburg, without result. In 1519, he met Dr. Eck in the Leipzig Disputation, Melanchthon, a young man of twenty-two, accompanying him. In 1520, he issued his "Address to the Christian Nobles of the German Nation," and the "Babylonian Captivity of the Church." In the same year the pope excommunicated Luther, and the latter, in defiance, publicly burned the papal bull.

It was in the following year, 1521, that Luther was cited before the Emperor, Charles V., and the *Diet in session at Worms*, to answer for himself and his teachings. On April 18th, having firmly and courageously refused to recant except he were convinced of error from the Scriptures, he uttered the memorable words, "Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise. God help me. Amen." For the sake of safety, the Elector kept Luther for some months after in the Wartburg Castle,

where he accomplished his valuable work of translating the New Testament into the German tongue.

Luther took another decisive step in 1525 when he married Catherine von Bora, who had been a nun, thus trampling upon the Roman rule of the celibacy of the priesthood. The evangelical princes of Germany presented their great confession of faith to the Emperor and the Diet at Augsburg in 1530. The Lutheran Church honors it as the **"Augsburg Confession."** It was prepared by Melanchthon with much of Luther's work included.

Luther died in February, 1545. During all these years, from 1517, the Reformation continued to gain in power and scope, Luther being the directing influence in the German states. It spread to other lands in which other great leaders arose to direct its progress. Associated with Luther were Philip Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, Justus Jonas, Spalatin, the Elector Frederick, and others. Luther's labors were extraordinary, as he contended for the evangelical truth against Rome and every form of error. He was the most influential and forceful personality of the sixteenth century, without exception; and the mighty impetus which he gave to freedom of thought and conscience and to evangelical truth has not lost its power to this day. Calvin, Zwingli and Knox also were great and noble men of God in the leadership of the Reformation, but Luther easily holds the first rank.

4. **Principles of the Reformation.** It has been said that "the Reformation, viewed in its most general character was the reaction of Christianity as gospel against Christianity as law." This reaction appeared especially in the first great principle of the Reformation, known as the material or subjective principle, namely, *justification by faith*. For centuries the Roman Church, in practice, had ceased to teach this doctrine and had obscured the rightful place of Christ in salvation. Instead she taught justification and salvation by good works and human merit.

Luther had gained the true doctrine out of his own spiritual experience with the word of God, and his assertion of justification and salvation by faith in Christ (by faith alone), over against the indulgences, was the beginning of the reforming movement.

The declaration of the above principle soon led Luther to take his stand upon the second, the formal or *objective principle* of the Reformation, which maintains the supreme *authority of the Holy Scriptures* as the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Roman view had lifted the traditions or teachings of the Church to a place of equality, and often of superiority to the Scriptures. Romanists appealed to tra-

dition and not to the word. Luther refused to be judged by the former, but persistently appealed to the word of God as the only authority in matters of faith, which he, as a Christian, could recognize.

These were the two great principles of the Reformation, but a third important principle was the doctrine of the *universal priesthood of believers* as against the special priesthood, standing between Christ and the laity. Every believer has the right to approach the mercy-seat of God directly. Out of this principle grew the assertion of the right of private judgment or liberty of conscience. Hence, the religious and civil liberties which are found in highest degree in Protestant countries.

Other subordinate principles of the Reformation were the denial of the celibacy of the priesthood, the abolition of monasticism, the use of the Bible and the conduct of public worship in the language of the people, and the administration of both elements of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the bread and the wine, to the laity, instead of only the one element as given by the Church of Rome. These great doctrines and principles, so thoroughly scriptural, were the strength of the Lutheran movement.

QUESTIONS

1. Who was the great leader of the Reformation?
2. Describe Luther's youth and education.
3. Describe his religious experience in university and monastery.
4. What influence did Luther's visit to Rome have upon him?
5. How did the Reformation begin?
6. Tell what you can of Luther at the Diet of Worms.
7. What great work did Luther do in the Wartburg Castle?
8. What is the Augsburg Confession? How given?
9. What were the two leading principles of the Reformation?
10. What were other principles of the Reformation?

LESSON V

The Counter-Reformation and the Thirty Years' War

1. **The Lutheran Church.** When Luther entered upon his reforming activity, he had no purpose or desire whatever to break with the Church of Rome. He wished to remain loyal to the Church, while his great purpose was the cleansing of it and the restoration of the preaching of the pure gospel. The Roman Church eventually drove him and his followers from its fold, and the new Church developed of necessity. Luther's followers early were called "Lutherans," either from convenience or in ridicule. He called the new Church "The Evangelical Church," but it was natural that the name "Lutheran" should be applied to it and adhere.

By 1545 the Reformation had penetrated nearly every part of Europe. The Reformed doctrine led the movement in the southern countries, while the Lutheran faith was dominant in the north. It prevailed in most of the northern States of the German empire, and even far south until it touched the Austrian crown lands. In a generation's time the Lutheran Church became established in Denmark, in Norway and Sweden, then in Iceland, and finally in the Baltic provinces.

2. **The testing time.** Following close upon the Reformation and Luther's death the Church passed through a time of testing and sifting. The Smalcald War and the victory of the Emperor Charles V. over the Smalcald League of Protestant princes in 1547, gave a serious check to the Reformation. Persecutions were frequent and many doctrinal controversies divided the Lutheran leaders and the churches. In order to promote harmony and to settle these controversies, a document, known as the **Formula of Concord,** was drawn up. As finally prepared by the theologians, Andrea, Chemnitz, Selnecker and others, able successors of Luther in the championship of the evangelical faith, it was adopted in 1577, and was the means of gradually restoring doctrinal peace.

The Book of Concord, containing the Lutheran confessional writings (the Augsburg Confession, Melanchthon's Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, Luther's two catechisms, and the Formula of Concord), was published in 1580, and was at once

signed by many princes and cities and by nearly 9000 ministers. This number was largely increased later.

2. **The counter-reformation.** It could not be expected that the Roman Catholic hierarchy, long accustomed to unquestioned power, would quietly yield. After the first shock of the Reformation was over the papacy began to awaken to aggressive defence. The counter-reformation was greatly promoted by the celebrated *Council of Trent*, (1545-1563), whose extended sessions were instrumental in securing at least a partial correction of many of the gross abuses in the Church which the reformers condemned. Popes of a higher character now came to the papal chair.

Another effective agency in the Catholic restoration was the order of Jesuits (Society of Jesus), organized by Ignatius Loyola and six others, including Francis Xavier, and confirmed by papal order in 1540. They were pledged to absolute obedience to the pope and to the maintenance of the Catholic Church. To this day they are a dangerous menace to Protestantism.

A cruel agency employed by Rome against the evangelical churches was the Inquisition, reorganized in 1542, whose very name has been made infamous, especially by the horrid atrocities committed by the Spanish Inquisition.

The onward movement of the Reformation had crossed the Alps and the Pyrenees before it met effective resistance, but here in the Italian and Spanish peninsulas, Catholic strongholds, the tide was turned and began to roll backward. Besides the northern States, Protestantism had been in the ascendency in southern Germany, Bohemia, Moravia, Poland and Hungary. These, with Belgium and France, constituted "the great debatable land, where the two confessions struggled for the mastery." In all of these the Catholic counter-movement was triumphant by means of persecution, war and brutal massacre, as the massacre of St. Bartholomew's in France. In this Catholic reaction the Lutheran Church suffered greatly and lost much ground by the close of the sixteenth century.

4. **The Thirty Years' War.** The religious Peace of Augsburg (1555), had secured religious freedom to the Lutherans of Germany, but it was not for long. It became apparent that the struggle for religious supremacy could be settled only by the power of the sword, at least so far as the Church of Rome was concerned. As the aggressions of the Catholic princes increased as they were incited by the Jesuits and the popes, the Protestant princes formed the Protestant Union for defence in 1608. Opposed was the Catholic League.

The Thirty Years' War began in Protestant Bohemia. The Bohemians had succeeded in winning their religious liberties, and in 1607 Ferdinand, who had been appointed by the Emperor Matthias over Bohemia, took an oath to respect them. He believed, however, the detestable Romish maxim that "towards a heretic neither faith nor honor is binding," and soon violated his oath, and when he became Emperor of Austria became the leader of the Catholic League. The Bohemian liberties were trampled upon.

The *revolt of the oppressed Bohemians* in 1618 began the war. At first they were successful with the help of the Protestant Union, but were defeated in 1620 at the Battle of Prague by the Catholic Maximilian of Bavaria and Count Tilly. In the following months Bohemia was given up to fire and sword and was made a land of horror. The Catholic League in the succeeding years continued their victorious advance against the Lutherans, Count Tilly and then Wallenstein being their generals. By 1629 nearly all Lutheran Germany lay prostrate under the Catholic power, Stralsund on the Baltic Sea alone having been able successfully to withstand Wallenstein. To all appearance, Lutheranism was completely crushed and Protestantism had received its death-wound.

5. **Gustavus Adolphus.** In the hour of need help came in the person of the heroic Gustavus Adolphus, the Lutheran king of Lutheran Sweden. Gustavus was born December 9th, 1594, and early gave promise of his noble qualities as a man and a ruler. He was deeply pious, lived a life above reproach, and was devoted to the evangelical faith. He was a far-seeing statesman, a just ruler, and one of the greatest generals of his age.

As he looked upon the suffering of Germany and the Lutherans, he became convinced that God called him to deliver them, and he began his preparations. On May 20th, 1630, he bade farewell to the Swedish Diet in a touching and devout address, and in *June, 1630*, he landed with a little army of 15,000 men in Pomerania. His army, which to human eyes looked ridiculously small for its mighty task in the face of the victorious Catholic power, was unique. It consisted not of mercenaries, but of true Swedes, with much of the simple and stern piety of their beloved king and accustomed to the voice of prayer and hymn. Thoroughly disciplined, they were merciful and committed none of the ravages which were characteristic of the imperial armies.

Gustavus drove the imperialists out of Pomerania but was unable to prevent the terrible siege and sack of Magdeburg by Tilly. With an increased army Gustavus in the next two years defeated Tilly again

and again and Wallenstein himself, completely driving the Catholic League from the Protestant States, and inflicting crushing blows upon the former. On the victorious field of *Lutzen, November 6th, 1632*, Gustavus Adolphus fell mortally wounded, but he had lived long enough to save Lutheranism and Protestantism.

The war continued with varying energy and fortune, but the Protestants did not again lose the ground Gustavus had gained. By the *Peace of Westphalia*, in 1648, the Catholic princes yielded religious rights to the Protestants, and Germany had saved her religious and intellectual freedom. The Thirty Years' War was one of the most devastating in history. Much of Germany was left like a desert, and from one-half to two-thirds of the population perished. The population of Wurtemberg was reduced from 400,000 to 48,000 in a few years' time. Out of the fiery trial the Lutheran Church and the evangelical faith emerged safely and firmly established, but Protestantism in Bohemia, Silesia and Poland had been crushed.

QUESTIONS

1. Did Luther purpose the establishment of a new Church?
2. What was the progress of the Reformation until Luther's death?
3. What was the condition of the Church in the middle of the sixteenth century?
4. What were the Formula of Concord and the Book of Concord?
5. What was the counter-reformation?
6. What were its agencies?
7. What were the results by the end of the sixteenth century?
8. What was the Thirty Years' War? Its cause?
9. What was the part of Gustavus Adolphus in the war?
10. What were the results of the war as affecting the Lutheran Church?

LESSON VI

The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

1. **Religious life and conditions.** The theological controversies which had distracted the Lutheran Church gradually subsided after the adoption of the Formula of Concord in 1777 and the publication of the Book of Concord in 1780. Lutheran theology then entered upon a period of fullest and richest development, through the first half of the seventeenth century.

"The attachment of the Lutheran Church of this age to pure doctrine led to a one-sided over-estimation of it, often ending in dead orthodoxy. But a succession of able and learned theologians, who recognized the importance of heart-theology as well as sound doctrine, corrected this evil tendency by Scripture study, preaching and faithful pastoral work. A noble and moderate mysticism, which was thoroughly orthodox in its beliefs, and opposing orthodoxy only where that had become external and mechanical, had many influential representatives throughout the whole century, especially during the first half of it."*

As the historian, quoted above, points out, there were *two distinct tendencies*, the one, in the direction of spiritual coldness, externalism, and a lifeless orthodoxy; the other, still maintaining the rich spiritual life and deep piety, with evangelical faith, which characterized the reformers. There were many noble, scholarly and consecrated representatives of the latter tendency, among them being John Arndt (died 1621), whose "True Christianity" has been the means of leading thousands into light and salvation; John Valentine Andrea (died 1654); John Gerhardt (died 1637), whose "Sacred Meditations" have been widely read and a help to every generation since; and Paul Gerhardt (died 1676), the "prince of hymn writers."

2. **Sacred song.** There was a "wonderful fullness and spirituality of the religious life" among the greater part of the people of the Lutheran Church during this period, perhaps evoked by the fiery trials of the Thirty Years' War. There were many beautiful evidences of deep Christian life and piety.

The rich development of sacred song as well as of devotional litera-

* Kurtz: "Church History," Vol. III., p. 44.

ture is proof of the above. There were many gifted hymn-writers, including Hermann, Fleming, John Rist, Alberti and Martin Rinkart (died 1648), who has given the Church the stately and noble hymn, "Now thank we all our God." The greatest Lutheran hymn writer of the seventeenth century was Paul Gerhardt, theologian and poet, (died 1676), ranking next after Luther, who was the greatest of all the evangelical sacred poets. Among others Gerhardt has left the fine hymns, "All my heart this night rejoices," "Give to the winds thy fears," "Jesus, Thy boundless love to me," and his translation of Bernard's hymn, "O sacred Head, now wounded."

3. **The period of spiritual decline.** The middle of the seventeenth century, from 1648 to the beginnings of Pietism (1675-1680), was a time of spiritual decline and coldness, notwithstanding many able theologians and teachers like Chemnitz and Quenstedt. There was great devotion to confessional orthodoxy but indifference to evangelical preaching, catechisation and the study of the Bible. Such spiritually-minded men as Paul Gerhardt were misunderstood and often harshly treated.

4. **The Pietists.** This season of spiritual coldness and deadness in the Church was succeeded during the closing decades of the century by a widespread and beneficent reaction in the direction of a more spiritual piety and a practical Christian life. The first and chief leader in this movement of "Pietism" was *Philip Jacob Spener*, who was born in 1635 and died in Berlin in 1705. He received a thorough education under pious and liberal influences at Strassburg, in which city he also served as pastor after lecturing and preaching for some years in other university cities. On account of his singularly wide scholarship, rare gifts, zeal and spirituality, he was called to the leading place among the Lutheran clergy of Frankfort-on-the-Main when but thirty-one years of age. In 1686 he became chief court preacher in Dresden, which city he was compelled to leave because of his pastoral and pietistic zeal. He was promptly given a position of wide influence as provost of Berlin, where he continued to his death.

Spener was early much distressed by the *prevalent unspiritual conditions* and was convinced that a *new reformation* was needed in the Lutheran Church. At Frankfort he began his Bible lectures, devotional explanations of the Scriptures, private religious meetings for Christian conversation, and catechetical instruction for young and old. His methods were very effective towards a more spiritual faith and were followed by hundreds of pastors in many parts of Germany. Spener, while zealous for a genuine piety, never swerved from loyalty

to the Lutheran confessions, but many of his followers in time ran to extravagances, and their "excessive displays of piety in their outward conduct" won the name "Pietists."

Francke. The greatest of Spener's successors was August Herman Francke, who was born at Lubeck in 1663. He studied theology at Erfurt, Kiel and Leipzig, and his life received its spiritual direction from Spener, whom he met in 1688. He taught and preached at Erfurt, Hamburg, Leipzig (in which places he was persecuted for his piety), and finally at Halle, at the new university founded in 1694 under the influence of the Pietists. At Halle his great life-work was done until his death in 1727. Of sound scholarship and fine piety, he early took his place as one of the most influential and distinguished leaders of the Pietism of his day.

"More than 6000 theologians from all parts of Germany had, down to Francke's death, received their theological training at Halle, and carried the leaven of his spirit into as many churches and schools."* Pietism aroused many controversies and much opposition among the strictly orthodox on account of the fanatical extravagancies which appeared, but its effect was to secure, even among its opponents, the general teaching and preaching of pure doctrine and a pious life, with the consequent uplifting of Christian life and character.

Francke's most famous work was the development of his orphanage and schools at Halle. To these we shall refer later. Other distinguished leaders of the Pietistic movement were Breithaupt (died 1732), and Charles Henry von Bogatzky (died 1774). The influence of Pietism was felt for good in Lutheran Sweden, and, indeed, over all of Protestant Europe, as in the Methodist movement in England.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, the *Lutheran hymnology* was enriched by many valuable contributions largely reflecting the fervent piety of Francke and his followers. Notable hymn writers were Richter, Winckler, Rambach, Schmolck and Rothe. John Sebastian Bach, of Leipzig, "the most perfect organist who ever lived," and Handel of Halle, "a master in oratorio music," belong to this period

5. **The period of Rationalism, or the "Illumination."** The period from 1750 to 1820 has been pronounced the "darkest and saddest in the history of the Church since the Reformation." The Rationalism which found an entrance into Germany in the middle of the century was the result partly of a reaction from the extremes of Pietism and partly of the influence of English deism and French natural-

*Kurtz: "Church History," Vol. III., p. 104.

ism, while Frederick the Great of Prussia, who surrounded himself with French free-thinkers like Voltaire, materially promoted it.

Rationalism did not break entirely with the Bible and the Church, but proceeding from the standpoint of human reason, weakened the chief doctrines of the gospel and subordinated the Bible and the Church to the reason. The results were most sad in the coldness and deadness of the Church, the perversions of God's word and the mutilations of liturgies and hymn-books. The Lord, however, still had His faithful servants who stood for the true faith, like the Christian poet and professor, Gellert, Herder, and notably John Frederick Oberlin (1740-1826).

A *reaction* again to an *evangelical faith* and a purer Church life came in the first part of the nineteenth century, led by Oberlin and Claus Harms. In 1817 Frederick William of Prussia brought about the union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in his land, while the Lutheran Church in other States of Germany rapidly recovered its life and spiritual power.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the religious condition of the Church during the period of the Thirty Years' War?
2. Name some prominent leaders of the Church in this period.
3. Who were some of the great hymn writers of this time?
4. What was the religious character of the second half of the seventeenth century?
5. What was Pietism?
6. Who was the first geat leader of the Pietists?
7. Outline Spener's life and work.
8. Outline Francke's life and influence.
9. What was the state of religion in the second half of the eighteenth century?
10. What was Rationalism? Its effects?
11. When was the Prussian Union formed?

LESSON VII

The Lutheran Church in America

1. **The first Lutherans in America.** The Catholic Church came to the new world with the Spaniards. The Church of England was planted at Jamestown in 1607 by the English, and the Puritan and Congregational Churches in New England in 1620 by the "Pilgrim Fathers." In 1623, Dutch Reformed colonists settled in New Amsterdam, on the Island of Manhattan, and with them a number of *Dutch Lutherans*. These were the first Lutherans in America. It was years before they secured a pastor, and they suffered many minor persecutions at the hands of the Reformed. In 1650, there was a Lutheran church at Albany.

In 1638, *Swedish Lutheran colonists* settled on the Delaware, purchasing their lands honorably from the Indians, with whom they always remained at peace. They built the first Lutheran church in America in connection with their fort at Christiana, now Wilmington, Del. Their first pastor, Rev. R. Torkillus, came in 1639, followed by a second in a couple of years, *Rev. John Campanius*. Campanius was the first missionary to the Indians, and translated Luther's catechism into the Delaware tongue, the first book translated into any Indian language, antedating John Eliot's translation of the New Testament. These Swedish Lutherans increased and spread over the neighboring country.

Probably a few *German Lutherans* came to America about 1680, but they did not come in any appreciable numbers until after the founding of Pennsylvania in 1683. From 1700 Lutheran immigration increased steadily. On June 13th, 1710, 4000 landed from ten vessels in New York. It was estimated that, up to 1721, not less than 50,000 foreigners, mostly Germans, had come to the one province of Pennsylvania. By 1750, the population had become a very mixed one. The Quakers, of course, were the original settlers, and were very strong and numerous around Philadelphia and in Chester and Bucks Counties. There were many Swedes along the Delaware, while throughout the province were Welshmen, many Scotch-Irish, and a sprinkling of French Huguenots. The German and Swiss-German element was exceedingly strong in the southeastern counties. In

1752, Pennsylvania had a population of 190,000, and 90,000 of these were Germans. Three years later, the population had increased to 220,000, half being German, and the large majority of the Germans being Lutheran in faith.

During these formative years of the colony, the *religious condition* of the Lutheran settlers was deplorable. They were in great spiritual destitution, with but few churches and fewer pastors, most of these being ill qualified for their sacred office. They were pioneer settlers, poor in everything but land, scattered far and wide, and engaged in clearing a country that had never been tilled by civilized hands. Consequently there were but few churches up to 1740. There was one at Philadelphia and others near at New Hanover and New Providence, the latter known as the Trappe. There were congregations at several of the larger places, like Reading and Lancaster. In 1735, there were but eight Lutheran pastors in all America in all languages, and only one in Pennsylvania, Caspar Stoever.

2. **Muhlenberg.** Meanwhile, the Lord was preparing one who would shepherd His scattered flock and who would be known in after years as the "patriarch of the Lutheran Church in America." Henry Melchior Muhlenberg was born September 6th, 1711, at Eimbeck, in Hanover, of godly and honored parents. He received the best of schooling and applied himself diligently. His studies were interrupted for a time by his father's death, but his love of learning conquered all difficulties. He was a godly youth, but especially at the University of Goettingen he developed into a man of deep and practical piety. Later, at Halle, he came into intimate fellowship with Francke, who did much to shape his career.

Muhlenberg studied, taught, was ordained, preached, and thought of going as a missionary to India. On *September 6th, 1741*, occurred the memorable scene at Francke's supper table in Halle, Muhlenberg, then a pastor, being present. Francke had just received fresh and pressing appeals from the American churches for help, and, turning to his guest, he asked, "Will you go as missionary to the scattered Lutherans in Pennsylvania?"—adding, "for a few years on trial." The young pastor immediately replied, "If it is the will of God, I not only will but must go where Providence points the way." The reply reveals the qualifications of the man, firmness and decision of character, strong moral fiber, deep spirituality and the courage of a genuine Christian faith. At the same time, he was a sound and able theologian, of thorough scholarly attainments.

After some months at London with Ziegenhagen, he sailed for

Charleston, S. C., and finally reached *Philadelphia, November 25th, 1742.* Muhlenberg found the Lutheran churches around Philadelphia in great confusion; but in a year's time he established order, secured harmony and awakened the people to new life. He then began to enlarge the scope of his efforts; and from this time his labors were truly apostolic. He went up and down the land from New York to Maryland, visiting the scattered Lutherans, baptizing, catechising and confirming their children, establishing churches and preaching with great power. In 1745, three helpers arrived from Halle, Brunnholtz, Schaum and Kurtz.

In 1748, a *uniform liturgy* was agreed upon by the pastors, under the leadership of Muhlenberg, and the *first Synod* in America was organized with six pastors and ten congregations represented by delegates, more joining later. Muhlenberg was the first President. For many years the care of all the churches was upon him, and his toil was unremitting. A part of the time he was in the pastorate near Philadelphia and in the city, but he continued his missionary journeys among the churches. He was married to Anna, daughter of Conrad Weiser in 1745. Four of their sons attained great eminence. Muhlenberg died October 7th, 1787, and his death occasioned widespread grief from Virginia to New York.

3. **Muhlenberg's helpers and successors.** From 1750 to 1775 numerous pastors were sent from Halle, many being able men. Among these were Heintzelman, Schultze, Helmuth (1765), and John Christopher Kunze, the most gifted of them all, who arrived in 1770 and died in 1807.

The Revolutionary War wrought many ravages among the churches, but they continued to grow under the wise leadership of the Schaeffers, J. N. and J. D. Kurtz, Henry E. Muhlenberg, the youngest son of the "patriarch" and the influential pastor at Lancaster for thirty-five years, Kunze, Schmucker, Lochman, and many others. At the close of the eighteenth century the Lutheran Church had become a recognized factor among the religious forces of Pennsylvania and adjacent States. Thus far the Church was largely German in language and partly Swedish. The first entirely English-speaking congregation was organized in Philadelphia in 1807, St. John's Church. The use of the English language steadily increased.

4. **The development of the Synods.** In 1787, the Ministerium of New York was organized with fourteen ministers, and the Synod of Ohio in 1818. In 1820, the Synod of Maryland and Virginia was founded.

The need of a more compact organization of the Church becoming apparent, the *General Synod* was formed in *1820* at Hagerstown, Md., the first general body in the Lutheran Church in America. Four Synods (Pennsylvania, New York, North Carolina, and that of Maryland and Virginia) sent representatives, including Drs. Lochman and Schmucker. The first President was Rev. J. D. Kurtz, D. D., and the first Secretary, Rev. H. A. Muhlenberg, D. D., the grandson of the "patriarch."

The Joint Synod of Ohio was formed as a general body in 1833; the United Synod South in 1862; the General Council in 1867; the Synodical Conference in 1872. There are also numerous independent Synods. The Lutheran Church in America reported, in January, 1911, 2,206,298 confirmed members, who are of many nationalities and tongues.

The first regularly organized theological seminary of the Church was *Hartwick Seminary*, Otsego County, N. Y., founded in 1816. The first college was *Pennsylvania College*, founded at Gettysburg in 1832.

QUESTIONS

1. When and where did the first Lutherans come to America?
2. Who was the first missionary to the Indians?
3. When did the German Lutherans begin to come, and where did they settle?
4. What was the religious condition of the first Lutherans in Pennsylvania?
5. Sketch the life and work of Muhlenberg.
6. When was the first Synod organized?
7. Name some of Muhlenberg's coworkers.
8. Name some of the leaders of the Church at the close of the eighteenth century.
9. When was the first general body organized? Where?
10. What other general Lutheran bodies are there in America?
11. What is the oldest theological seminary in America?
12. When and where was the first Lutheran college established in America?

LESSON VIII

Lutheran Missions and Philanthropies

I. Lutheran foreign missions.

(1) **Missionary pioneers.** The missionary spirit is a vital and essential element of the Christian religion. The Lutheran Church, as might be expected from her genius and her character and her thoroughly evangelical theology, has ever been imbued with the spirit of missions. The pioneers of Protestant missions have been chiefly Lutherans.

Luther manifested much concern for missionary work among the heathen and Moslems, but the struggle for existence by the evangelical churches prevented much being done. From 1550, under Gustavus Vasa, to the end of the century the Swedish Lutherans sent missionaries and made efforts for the conversion of the Laplanders, and under Gustavus Adolphus (1611-1632) the work was continued more vigorously. The Swedish Church also began work among the Baltic provinces, whose inhabitants still clung tenaciously to many of their heathen practices. One of the chief motives of Gustavus Adolphus in founding his colony in America was Christian work among the Indians.

The Danes established a colony on the Coromandel Coast of India in 1620, and the chaplains were directed to use their efforts for the conversion of the heathen. *Jacob Worm* gained the title, "India's Danish Apostle." *Peter Heyling* was sent by the city of Lubeck to Abyssinia in 1634, and labored successfully twenty years. *Von Welz*, of Cayenne, is another noble missionary pioneer of this age. *Hans Egede*, a Norwegian, under Danish auspices, entered Greenland with the gospel in 1721.

(2) **Beginnings in India.** Ninety years before William Carey, whose work is considered the beginning of English missionary activity, the foundation of Protestant mission work was laid in India by the Danish Lutherans. It is of interest that the Danish Lutherans "sheltered and befriended the first English missionaries against the persecutions of their own countrymen." *Ziegenbalg* and *Plütschau*, men of superior qualifications, were sent out to Tranquebar in 1705, by Frederick IV. of Denmark, and labored with devotion and success. While Catholic missionaries had been in India for two hundred years, Ziegen-

balg was the first to translate the Bible into a native language. In eleven years 450 converts were gathered and in the next forty years, under the successors of Ziegenbalg and Plütschau, the Tamil converts numbered 9000.

In 1750 *Christian Frederick Schwartz*, who is justly styled "the greatest missionary since the time of the apostles," entered upon his half-century work, going to the same field under Danish auspices. He was instrumental in gathering thousands into the Church, and sometimes saw entire villages accept Christ at once. He was the only man completely trusted by both the English and the native princes. His influence for good was remarkable.

(3) **Missionary expansion.** In the rapid missionary expansion of the nineteenth century the Lutheran Church has had an honorable part. Among the leading missionary societies of our faith are the Basel or Evangelical Society (Lutheran and Reformed), organized in 1815; the Berlin Society, 1824, supported chiefly by Lutherans; the Rhenish or Barmen Society, 1829, chiefly Lutheran; the Evangelical Lutheran (Leipzig) Society, 1836; the Gossner Society, 1836; the General Synod (U. S.), 1837; the Hermannsburg Society, 1853; the General Council (U. S.), 1869, and numerous other societies in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, France and America, a total of sixty-nine societies.

These missionary societies have been and are working in all parts of the non-Christian world, and have done a splendid work for Christ. The most notable of them is the *Hermannsburg* Missionary Society, organized by Pastor Louis Harms in his parish in the little town of Hermannsburg, Germany. Mission training schools were established, a dozen missionaries secured from the congregation and the ship "Candace" bought. The latter sailed in 1853. Numerous Hermannsburg mission stations are established in Africa, Asia and Australia. It has been a notable work of Christian faith and prayer.

According to the latest statistics for 1910 (Dr. Lenker's), there are ninety-three Lutheran missionary societies in the world, more than sixty of which were organized since 1870. Of these Germany claims twenty-eight, which support 1,845 missionaries and have 571,345 native Christian members. North America has twenty-seven societies which support 288 missionaries and have 65,580 members. The other societies are scattered over other countries with Lutheran populations. All told, these societies support 3,032 missionaries, 347 deaconesses, number 856,985 native members, and received in contributions for their work $4,372,827.00.

II. Lutheran philanthropies. Lutheranism readily recognized the broad and scriptural view of the far-reaching mission of Christianity, and, as the result, has developed a marvelous multiplicity of organizations for the relief of the suffering and forsaken. These agencies are usually summed up under the general term of "Inner Missions," comprehending orphanages, homes for the aged, asylums for the blind, deaf and dumb, imbeciles, epileptics and the like; hospitals, deaconess homes, and a great variety of minor, but none the less useful, Inner Mission enterprises.

(1) **Orphan work.** One of the noblest works which our religion has inspired her followers to undertake has been the rescue and care of orphan children. In Lutheran Germany, already in the sixteenth century, such beginnings were made two hundred years before the first practical orphan work in England was undertaken. Lutheran efforts at orphan work steadily grew through the seventeenth century until, in 1695, the great soul of *August Herman Francke*, in the spirit of the deepest piety, was moved to take up this work at Halle. Touched by the condition of those who came to his door for alms, he became concerned for the children of the poor, and established his little "poor school" in the year mentioned. On November 5th, 1695, he received the first orphan boy into his own home. The corner-stone of the present orphan house was laid in 1698.

The work, which was one of faith and prayer, sustained by voluntary gifts, at Francke's death in 1727, numbered seven departments, with 1725 pupils in the poor schools and 134 in the orphanage. At present there are many departments of the institution and more than 4000 children are in the schools and orphanages, while over 12,000 orphans have been cared for and educated since the beginning.

(2) **Deaconess work.** Another institution whose modern development had its origin in the Lutheran Church, is the Deaconess work. Deaconesses, appointed for ministry to the poor and distressed, were known in the early Church, but the modern development of the office dates from 1833, when the godly young Lutheran pastor at Kaiserswerth, Germany, *Theodore Fliedner*, felt his first promptings to his great work in the appeal for help by a discharged prisoner, a woman. He cared for her, and soon, in a humble way, established his school for the training of teachers and nurses to care for the sick and neglected. Out of this grew the Kaiserswerth Motherhouse of Deaconesses, in fact, eleven institutions in one, including a school for little children, orphanage, high school, hospital, Magdalen Home for fallen women, and training school for deaconesses. These minister to the

poor, the sick and the neglected for mercy's sake without pecuniary compensation.

That first motherhouse has been multiplied many times, until to-day there are upwards of *eighty-five Lutheran motherhouses* and over 21,000 deaconesses in all parts of the world, humbly and faithfully fulfilling their Christlike mission.

(3) **Inner Missions.** The term "Inner Missions," in its narrower sense, comprehends the noble work founded by one of the foremost Christian philanthropists of the nineteenth century, *John Henry Wichern*, the pious and energetic Lutheran pastor in the village of Horn, three miles from Hamburg. He established in 1833 a little home and school for the reclaiming of outcast and incorrigible boys, which was very successful. His idea took root and developed in many directions, until to-day more than 16,000,000 marks are contributed yearly by the churches of Germany for the Inner Mission work besides what the State gives.

There were founded scores of these homes for vicious and neglected children, many others to care for the inmates of prisons, and others to care for discharged prisoners. One of the finest developments of the Inner Mission idea has been the establishment of *Christian inns*, scattered over Lutheran Europe, to protect and keep young men from the evils of the public drinking houses and worse.

The Lutheran Church maintains, the world over, many hundreds of Inner Mission agencies of every conceivable kind, for orphans, the aged, the sick, crippled, the fallen, the unfortunate, for prisoners and the friendless. The American Lutheran Church sustains 57 orphans' homes, 9 deaconess homes, 36 homes for the aged, 44 hospitals and 19 immigrant missions (1911).

QUESTIONS

1. What were the earliest missionary efforts of the Lutheran Church?

2. Who were the first Danish missionaries, and where did they labor?

3. What and when was the first effective missionary work in India?

4. Tell something of Schwartz's work.

5. Name five of the leading Lutheran foreign missionary societies.

6. Describe the origin and work of the Hermannsburg Missionary Society.

7. What is the extent of Lutheran foreign mission work to-day?

8. What has been the attitude of the Lutheran Church to philanthropic works of mercy?

9. Tell something of Lutheran orphan work, including Francke's.

10. Tell something of Fliedner and the deaconess work.

11. Tell something of Wichern and the development of Inner Missions.

12. What is the Lutheran Church doing to-day with works of mercy?

LESSON IX

The Lutheran Church To-day

1. **Extent and numbers.** No Christian Church has a better claim to be called a "universal Church" than the Lutheran, for her members are found in nearly all lands. In their dispersion over the world, Lutherans have carried with them the faith of their fathers, have planted it in new soil, organized congregations and erected houses of worship. In addition they have sent foreign missionaries into most heathen lands to plant and preach the Christian religion, with the result that there are but few divisions of the earth where the Lutheran Church is not earnestly engaged in doing the Master's business.

Dr. Lenker's latest (1908) statistics ior *Lutheranism in the world* report for Europe over 60,000,000 Lutherans (Germany, about 40,000,000; Denmark, 2,630,000; Norway, 2,423,000; Sweden, 5,410,000; Finland, 3,000,000; Poland, 460,000; remaining, Russia, 4,590,000; Austria, 420,000; Hungary, 1,310,000; France, 140,000; Holland, 100,000; British Isles, 382,000); Asia, 412,000 (Asiatic Russia, 136,000; India, 234,000; China, 31,000); Africa, 431,000 (West Africa, 36,000; South Africa, 240,000; Madagascar, 128,000); Oceanica, 244,000 (Australia, 117,000; New Zealand, 13,000; Sumatra, 104,630; Borneo, 3,100); South America, 770,000 (Brazil, 560,000; Argentine Republic, 115,000; Chili, 76,000); North America, 13,443,000 (United States, 13,000,000; Canada, 400,000; Greenland, 11,896; Nova Scotia, 12,500). Total in the world 38,102 pastors, 60,385 churches, 76,000,000 baptized members, 105,734 parochial schools. Thus the "mother Church of Protestantism" still holds her leadership and numbers fully one-half of all Protestantism. "In the English world there are 14,000,000 Lutherans, outnumbered only by the Episcopalians and Methodists. In British India they rank second; in British South Africa second; in Australia fourth; in the United States third," where they are exceeded only by the Methodists and Baptists among Protestants.

The Lutheran Church is a *polyglot Church*, preaching the gospel in all the leading languages of the world and in many of the lesser tongues and dialects. German, of course, is the language of the large majority, namely, 50,000,000. In cities like New York and Chicago, Lutherans are worshiping God in many tongues.

2. **Growth.** The Lutheran Church is growing rapidly. This is due partly to steady, aggressive work in the congregations, partly to immigration and partly to her missionary operations. In the United States the Church has doubled her membership every fourteen years during the last fifty years. In Canada, the last decade, her increase was 44 per cent. There has been a notable growth of Lutheranism in Argentina and Brazil in South America. In Europe there is a very noticeable movement among Catholics to our Church. In Germany, from 1890 to 1905, 84,571 Catholics joined the Lutheran Church, and in Austria, in the last eight years, 37,715 Catholics joined the Protestants.

3. **Government.** The Lutheran Church adapts herself to any form of church polity adapted to the character of the people or the political form of government where she exists. In Germany, the fatherland of Lutheranism, the form of church government is *consistorial*, that is, by bodies of clergymen and laymen, appointed by the sovereigns as superintendents, and by provincial consistorial boards. The government of the Swedish Lutheran Church is episcopal in form. The Swedish Reformation was so complete that the bishops were retained, and so this branch possesses an historic line of these high officials. In other Scandinavian countries the government is by bishops or superintendents.

In North America the form of government is *synodical*, with a moderate congregational form of government in local congregations. There are many divisions of the Lutheran Church: five general bodies (the General Synod, the General Council, the United Synod South, the Synodical Conference, the Joint Synod of Ohio) and fifteen independent Synods.

4. **Missions and philanthropies.** These classes of activities have already been considered in Lesson VIII. We may add that the Lutheran Church leads the Protestant world in the development of Christian philanthropic and humanitarian agencies. She has especially developed inner mission work, deaconess work and hospitals, while she maintains large numbers of homes for orphans, the aged and the infirm.

The Lutheran Church is bearing a large and honorable part in the foreign mission work of the world, her missionaries being at work in every great mission field. In Africa a large proportion of the foreign missionaries are Lutherans, while in India a chain of Lutheran missions extends from Cape Comorin in the south to the Himalayas in the north, making the Lutheran Church an important factor in the evangelization of India.

5. **Home mission opportunities.** No church has greater or more pressing home mission opportunities in America than the Lutheran. This is due in large part to the great volume of immigration from Lutheran lands during the last half century. Aside from having her share with other churches in the general home mission opportunities of the land, the Lutheran Church owes a special duty to those of our own "household of faith." It is estimated that there are in this country 27,000,000 of foreign-born population and of the first generation, and of these 13,000,000 are Lutherans. Out of every thousand immigrants landing at Ellis Island and Castle Garden, 225 are Lutherans.

These immigrants scatter over the land, but great numbers especially have been filling up the States of the West and Northwest. Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Minneapolis are largely Lutheran cities, while Lutherans predominate in the agricultural population of Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Dakotas. They are of the best blood of northern Europe, and want Lutheran churches established.

The General Conference, being the largest of Lutheran bodies, naturally leads in home mission work, maintaining 1131 missions in the United States and Canada under the charge of 467 home missionaries. The General Council, the General Synod, and other bodies are supporting missions in proportion, but the needs of the great field are not yet met. It is certain, however, that the Lutheran Church will be an increasingly powerful factor in the future religious development and history of America.

6. **Education and learning.** The Lutheran Church was born in a university, and ever since has given every encouragement to higher education and learning. She calls the schoolmaster as well as the pastor into her service, and she is noted for her scholarly ministry. The standards of admission to the sacred calling are high and strict.

To-day the large majority of the *great universities* of northern Europe are Lutheran, while her lesser schools are numbered by the hundreds. In America the Lutheran Church maintains 25 theological seminaries, 41 colleges, 50 academies and 7 schools for young women; a total of 123 institutions of learning with 975 professors, 14,991 students, a property valuation of $8,264,800.00, and a total endowment of $2,549,400.00. (Reports at close of 1908.) Besides these there are 3,401 parochial schools. There are 196 Lutheran periodicals in America published in twelve languages.

7. **Loyalty to the faith.** The Lutheran Church is one of the strongest defenders of the Christian faith. While there has been wavering in some quarters, with demands for alterations in historic statements

of faith, there has been no demand for change in the statements of doctrine in the Augsburg Confession. It is true that the destructive criticism of the Bible has flourished in many of the German universities, but the great majority of the pastors of the German churches are steadfast in their loyalty to the fundamentals of the Christian faith.

In America Lutheran pastors and teachers, almost without exception, are loyal to the standards of evangelical religion, and the fine scholarship which is characteristic of them is enlisted in the hearty and aggressive support of our Church's historic faith. The Lutheran Church is one of the most steadfast bulwarks of evangelical faith and truth in this country, while the loyalty of her members is widely recognized. The Providence of God is clearly manifest in our Church's history. That He still has a great mission in store for her we cannot doubt.

QUESTIONS

1. Has the Lutheran Church a claim to be called a "universal Church"?
2. What is her numerical strength in the world?
3. What is her rank and strength in America?
4. In what languages chiefly is Lutheranism preached?
5. Where has the Lutheran Church had the most wonderful growth?
6. To what extent does she attract from the Church of Rome?
7. What forms of church government prevail in our Church?
8. What is she doing in foreign mission fields?
9. What does she do in humanitarian work?
10. What is the extent of our home mission field in America?
11. What is being done?
12. What is the Lutheran Church doing for higher education?
13. Is the Lutheran Church loyal to the gospel and the Christian faith?

PART TWO

THE CHURCH AND THE MEANS OF GRACE

PART II

The Church and the Means of Grace

LESSON I

The Word, the Primary Means of Grace

The Lutheran Church has long been convinced of the unquestionable value for child-nurture, of careful instruction for her children. They should be thoroughly taught in the Scriptures and should be given knowledge of Christian doctrine and the use of the means of grace. Knowledge is the basis of stability in the Christian life, for true religion must be a matter of personal experience. The latter is founded on knowledge. The mind must be appealed to and convictions as to truth and right and duty must be formed before the heart can be enlisted and an abiding love for Christ established. A shallow faith and an emotional enthusiasm, not founded on the knowledge of Christ and the gospel, quickly pass away.

Paul could say, "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded," etc. (2 Tim. 1:12.) The child should be led up to the same point of knowledge and conviction. Thus only will he become firmly anchored in the Christian faith and continue a loyal follower of Jesus. The Sunday school teacher also, to whom we entrust such a considerable share of the nurture of the children of the Church, should be well grounded in the knowledge of gospel teaching and the means of grace. Therefore we devote Part II. of this volume to the means of grace as dispensed by the Church. We consider the word and its application first.

1. **The means of grace.** The purpose of God towards men is their salvation. They are capable of receiving salvation but cannot save themselves. "Christianity is a new creative principle in the history of the world; hence a new creative spiritual power must enter into combination with our moral life if we are to be Christians." * This power is the saving grace of God, His saving favor to sinners. But how is this grace to be received?

* Luthardt.

LUTHER SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

The present is a "*dispensation of means*," and God works mediately through appointed instrumentalities, which He has provided for the accomplishment of His purposes of grace. As our Saviour, in working His miracles, used various visible means, so the Holy Spirit employs external and clearly marked means for the application of redemption to men and for His sanctifying work in them. These are the *Word of God* and the *Sacraments*, which we call "*Means of Grace*." They are defined as "the divinely-appointed channels through which God makes known, offers and communicates His grace to us." They are necessary and indispensable.

2. **What is the word?** The word is God's revelation of Himself to the world, including the gospel message. He revealed Himself partly in the personal Word, Jesus Christ, who is the absolute and complete revelation of Deity. But He has also given His revelation in His spoken word through the prophets, evangelists and apostles. These were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and, so guided, proclaimed and transmitted the divine messages of truth and grace. (2 Peter 1 : 21 ; Acts 28 : 25.) The Old Testament was given by the prophets ; the New Testament by the evangelists and apostles who received the gospel teaching from our Lord. God spoke to them and us through His Son. (Heb. 1 : 2.)

The *spoken word* was committed to writing, and thus was transmitted to successive generations. These writings are the Holy Scriptures. The Bible, therefore, is the *word of God*, the word of divine revelation and salvation.

The **word** is the **primary and chief** means of grace, being fundamental and essential to the sacramental character of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Without the word they would be empty forms, without power or efficacy. Luther, speaking of the sacraments, has said, "Alone through the gospel are these conceived, made, developed, born, clothed, strengthened and kept."

3. **The law and the gospel.** We recognize a distinction in the word between the law and the gospel. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John 1 : 17.) We refer to the *moral law* as distinguished from the ceremonial and civil laws of the Hebrews, which were temporary. It is the eternal and perfect rule of moral conduct towards men and God, summarized in the Ten Commandments, and being "the declaration of the divine will concerning what man should be, should do, and should omit to do."—*Luthardt.* Its purpose is educative, producing the knowledge of sin and repentance, and serving as "our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." (Gal. 3 : 24.)

The *gospel* is the glad tidings of the gracious pardon of our sins, offered and promised gratuitously for Christ's sake through faith. It is the message of grace and the divine call to salvation through the redemption accomplished by our Saviour in His death.

The *law* and the *gospel* are not separated; they work together. The latter, as the principle of love, was in the former, though men did not see it clearly. The law is in the gospel, though Christ interpreted it with a wider range and scope than men had previously thought.

4. **The power of the word.** Power belongs to the word of God. This is clearly and frequently taught in the Scriptures, as when it is declared that the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16); that the word is "the sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17); that it is "quick and powerful" (Heb. 4:12); and that it is "a lamp unto my feet" (Ps. 119:105). It is shown also by its effects.

This is not a natural power, not the convincing force of human eloquence; it does not operate physically, but morally, by enlightening the mind, moving the will, and convincing men of the truth of God. It is a *supernatural power*, inherent in the word and reinforcing the power of truth which is already there. This power of the word depends upon the Holy Spirit and His abiding and life-giving presence.

The *power of Christianity* and the Church is nothing less than the mighty power of the sword of the Spirit. It is said that "when the knights of Germany offered their swords to Luther in behalf of his cause, he refused them with the declaration, 'The word shall do it.'"

5. **The effects of the word.** The word is active and effective in establishing the new life in the repenting sinner and in building up the Christian life in the believer. The especial work of the Holy Spirit is ascribed to the word, for it is His instrument of power. The word guides and delivers from sin; it enables the sinner to enter the way of salvation and confers it. (James 1:21; Rom. 1:16; John 6:63.) It has power to enlighten and teach. (Ps. 119:130; 2 Pet. 1:19.)

Regeneration, whereby we are born again to the new life in Christ, is ascribed to the word of God as well as to the Spirit. (Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.) The Word also *sanctifies*—nourishes the newly implanted life to the fullness of Christian strength and maturity. (John 17:17.) Thus the Word, by the Holy Spirit, works repentance and faith, and converts, regenerates and renews the minds of men.

This is the teaching of the Lutheran Church (Augsburg Confession, Art. V.), and of Luther in the Smaller Catechism ("the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel").

6. **The application of the word.** *Preaching* has ever been the

means for the application of the word. The prophets preached. John the Baptist preached. Christ preached and commanded, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16 : 15. See also Matt. 28 : 19, 20, and John 8 : 31.) We thus understand that preaching has been appointed as the means by which the gospel is to be given and applied to men. Therefore, the apostles preached, and the chief duty of the ministers of the Church to-day is to preach.

In view of what has been said, it will be seen that the *principal factor* in the Christian nurture of the children of the Church is the *word of God*. As the word is the primary means of grace, if we would train up our children in the fear of God and in the Christian life, they must be instructed in the Scriptures, which are able to make them "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Timothy from a child knew the Holy Scriptures. (2 Tim. 3 : 14, 15.)

How may the *word* be *applied?*

(1) **By preaching.** From early childhood children should be trained to go to church. There they will be under the influence and blessing of the gospel, will learn to worship God, and, as they grow older, will understand more and more of the pastor's sermons and will profit by them. Parents should wisely but firmly direct their children, that the habit of church attendance may become fixed early.

(2) **By instruction in the Bible at home.** It is the duty of Christian parents to *teach the word* to their children, and to lead them to read and study the Bible for themselves. Every child should be trained in the habit of personal Bible reading.

(3) **By catechetical instruction** by the pastor. This will be considered in another lesson.

(4) **By the Sunday school teacher.** The particular function of the teacher in the Bible school is to explain the Scriptures and to give instruction therein to the children intrusted to his care. Next to the parent, he has the best and most frequent opportunities to impress religious truth out of the Bible upon the opening child mind. The *teacher's responsibility* is so great that he should prayerfully seek that preparation and equipment which will fit him intelligently to instruct his pupils.

Parents, teachers and pastors should heartily *cooperate* in the Bible-training of their children. The word of God is so vital in importance, that the spiritual nurture of the young and their continuance in the way of salvation are dependent upon the instruction therein which they receive.

QUESTIONS

1. What place does knowledge fill in the Christian life?
2. Why should the child be trained in the Scriptures?
3. What is meant by the means of grace?
4. How many means of grace are there?
5. What is the word of God?
6. How has it come to us?
7. What is the difference between the law and the gospel?
8. Does the word possess power? If so, what kind of power?
9. What effects are wrought by the word?
10. What is the chief means of applying the word to men?
11. How may the word be applied in promoting child-nurture?
12. What is the function of the Sunday school teacher as to applying the word?

LESSON II

The Sacrament of Baptism

1. We have seen that the means of grace are the word of God and the sacraments. Of these the word is the primary means of grace, through which the Holy Spirit works. The word comes to men in two ways: by the preaching and teaching of the Holy Scriptures and by and through the ordinances instituted by our Lord, namely, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, which have been called the "visible word."

Our catechism defines a *sacrament* as "a holy ordinance instituted by God, through which, by means of external and visible elements, He bestows and seals His grace. The three things essential to a sacrament are the divine institution, the visible element, and the heavenly gifts." By the reception of the sacramental elements the divine promise of the gratuitous forgiveness of sins is applied to the individual believer.

The sacraments are "*organs for applying the word*," in which lie their value and power. They "are dependent on the word also for their efficacy, inasmuch as they work only through the word—the word of the gospel received before the word of promise present in the administration, and the same word of direction and promise held fast in faith also after the sacramental action."* They are effective not in themselves but when received in faith, and become seals of Christ's covenant and the means by which He communicates saving grace.

As the sacraments are vital elements in God's plan of salvation, they are of great importance in the general culture of the Christian life, and especially in the nurture of the child. A knowledge of them belongs to the training of the teacher in the Bible school.

2. **Baptism: what is it?** Baptism is the sacrament by which we are first received into the Christian Church. As a religious rite it had "already been in use among the Jews, both in proselyte baptism and that of John." Christ takes it and gives it a new spiritual meaning and a new content of regenerating grace. It is the successor of circumcision in the Old Testament and is the act by which the individual

*Valentine: "Christian Theology," Vol. II., p. 290.

is brought into the new covenant relation with God. It is the beginning of the Christian life.

"Baptism, as a human ceremony," says Martensen,* "is an act of confession by which a person is admitted into Christ's Church; but as a divine ceremony, it is the act by which Christ, our invisible High Priest and King, establishes His Church within the individual, and consecrates him in a true relation to God."

3. **The authority of baptism.** The sacrament has been instituted by Christ and has a divine claim upon our attention. Luther says, in his Large Catechism: "In the first place, it is important above all things to know well the words upon which baptism is founded, and to which everything pertains that is to be said upon the subject, namely, where the Lord Christ speaks (Matt. 28 : 19), 'Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Likewise in St. Mark, the last chapter (v. 16), 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved : but he that believeth not shall be condemned.'

"In these words we must notice, in the first place, that here stands God's commandment and institution that we shall not doubt that baptism is divine, and not devised and invented by men. For as truly as I can say no man has spun the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer out of his head, but they are revealed and given by God Himself, so also I can boast that baptism is no human trifle, but that it is instituted by God Himself, and that it is most solemnly and rigidly commanded that we must be baptized or we cannot be saved." (See also John 3 : 5 ; Acts 2 : 38 ; Acts 22 : 16 ; Gal. 3 : 27, etc.)

Under all ordinary circumstances baptism is necessary to salvation. He who refuses it shows contempt for God's word.

4. **Meaning and effects of baptism.** In his Small Catechism, Luther says: "Baptism is not simply water, but it is the water comprehended in God's command, and connected with God's word. . . . It is not the water, indeed, that produces these effects, but the word of God which accompanies and is connected with the water, and our faith which relies on the word of God connected with the water." Baptism signifies that as water is the means for the cleansing and refreshing of the body, so the baptized believer is cleansed in heart from sin by the grace of God and is refreshed in spirit continually by the divine word, which is "the power of God unto salvation."

The *effects* of the administration of the sacrament and its reception in faith are these :

* "Dogmatic Theology," p. 422.

(1) It works the *forgiveness* of sins. (Acts 2 : 38.)

(2) It *confers grace* and salvation on all who believe. (Mark 16 : 16.)

(3) The work of *regeneration* is directly connected with baptism, regeneration being the setting up and beginning of the new life. (John 3 : 5 ; Titus 3 : 5.)

(4) It establishes and seals the believer's *covenant relation* with God, marking him now as a member of the Church and Christ's kingdom.

It should be added that the benefits of baptism are not limited to the moment of administration, but follow the believer throughout life. There is never need that the sacrament should be administered a second time.

On the part of the recipient of baptism, it is the act of publicly confessing Christ, declaring his faith, and manifesting his obedience and love to God.

5. **Infant baptism and child-nurture.** All persons who are to be saved must be baptized. Therefore, the subjects of baptism are : first, believing adults ; and secondly, infants. The Lutheran Church thoroughly appreciates the value and necessity of child baptism and consistently practices it, declaring her position in the Augsburg Confession, Article 9 : "Concerning baptism our churches teach that it is necessary to salvation ; that through baptism the grace of God is offered, and that children are to be baptized, who being by baptism offered to God, are received into His favor."

Our *reasons* for applying this sacrament to *infants* are these, in brief :

(1) Under the Old Testament covenant of grace children were explicitly included, and the commands were clear and positive. There is no reason why the children of the new dispensation should be denied the privilege and blessing conferred by the old. Instead, it is declared "the promise is unto you and to your children." (Acts 2 : 39.)

(2) Christ welcomed them, declaring, "Of such is the kingdom of God." (Mark 10 : 13-16.)

(3) The "great commission" is universal and unlimited in its application. (Matt. 28 : 19, 20.)

(4) Entire families were baptized by the apostles, doubtless including children. (Acts 16 : 33 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 16.)

(5) Infant baptism was the practice of the early Christian Church, and has been so of the greater part of the Church ever since.

Professor Gerberding sums up very well the *Lutheran view* upon

this subject:* "The children need grace; baptism confers grace. It is especially adapted to impart spiritual blessings to these little ones. We cannot take the preached word, but we can take the sacramental word and apply it to them. God established infant membership in His Church. He alone has a right to revoke it. He has never done so. Therefore it stands. If the Old Testament covenant of grace embraced infants, the new is not narrower but wider."

From the above outline of the doctrine of baptism it is clear that the sacrament holds a very *important relation* to the religious nurture of the child. Baptism is the foundation of the Christian training of the child within the protecting care of the Church. Baptism brings him into a state of forgiveness and acceptance with God, as a member of His Church. It is the means or channel of conferring grace and blessing. "Every drop of water proclaims that God loves not only the world, but that He loves the particular child baptized, and that to this child every promise recorded in the gospel most certainly belongs."†

As the child in his early years remembers that he is baptized, his baptism becomes a strong directive influence, molding his expanding life and character towards Christian faith and service. Through the beneficent grace of baptism the Holy Spirit accomplishes His early sanctifying work. Parents and teachers, concerned for the proper Christian nurture of the children, should give earnest heed to this doctrine.

QUESTIONS

1. What is a sacrament?
2. What gives the sacraments their efficacy?
3. What is baptism?
4. Why is baptism necessary in the practice of the Church?
5. What is its meaning?
6. What are the effects and benefits of baptism?
7. Should the act of baptism be repeated?
8. Why does the Lutheran Church teach and practice infant baptism?
9. What does the Augsburg Confession say?
10. Name five reasons for the practice of infant baptism.
11. What bearing has baptism on the religious nurture of children?
12. Is it right for parents to neglect the baptism of their children?

* "Way of Salvation," p. 39.
† Jacobs: "Elements of Religion," p. 163.

LESSON III

Catechisation

The primary agency, aside from the direct preaching of the word of God, which the Lutheran Church employs for the Christian nurture of her children, **is catechisation.** The ignorance of the majority of children and young people as to the simplest facts and teachings of the gospel, is saddening, if not well-nigh appalling. But they who have been faithfully trained in the catechism will not be open to the charge of ignorance, but will have an intelligent comprehension of religious truth, proportionate to their age. Such knowledge is essential to a living faith and to stability in the Christian life.

1. **Origin of catechisation.** The terms catechism, catechetics, catechisation, etc., are derived from a Greek word meaning to instruct orally. Later they came to have the idea of oral instruction by questions and answers. The practice of catechetical instruction began in the early Christian Church, when the gospel began to make headway among the non-Jewish peoples, and when great numbers were offering themselves for baptism, while ignorant of the fundamental principles of religion. Instruction was necessary before these proselytes could be permitted entrance into the Church. The first *catechumens*, therefore, were the adult candidates for baptism, who were kept under instruction for two or three years. Later the baptized children of Christian parents were received as catechumens in preparation for confirmation.

As early as the second century we find mention of *catechists* and *catechumens* in the Clementine Homilies, and, in the system followed in the fourth century, we find the catechumens receiving instruction in the Ten Commandments, a creed, and the Lord's Prayer. During the Middle Ages, under the influence of Romish errors, catechisation fell into quite general disuse, being supplanted by the confessional.

The Reformation was not only a revival of evangelical religion, but also a revival of the best methods of the early Church, including catechetical instruction. Luther was the father of this system in its modern form. Deeply concerned because of the widespread ignorance of the fundamental teachings of the Christian faith, among the German people, he prepared his two catechisms in 1529. His *Smaller*

Catechism was soon in use, for the instruction both of adults and children, by pastors and school-teachers throughout Saxony and other parts of Germany. In thirty-seven years, 100,000 copies were put into circulation. To-day in many lands and tongues, this little volume is still the basis for religious nurture in the Lutheran Church.

2. **The child catechumenate.** While originally the catechumenate consisted of the adult candidates for baptism, after the middle of the third century, when the Church was increasing naturally by its own children and when infant baptism had become established, it was followed by the child catechumenate, or the use of the system for the religious training of the baptized children of the Church. This was settled as the rule under Gregory the Great. During the Reformation it was re-established.

But what is the *child catechumenate?* What is its object? We have found no better answer than that given in Dr. G. U. Wenner's definition:* "It is that institution of Christ and the Church by which children are systematically taught and trained in such a way as to prepare them for a personal participation in the life and privileges of the Christian Church." He says further: "It has a definite end, that of making mature Christians out of incipient believers." The *aim of catechisation*, then, is to instruct the children in the truths of the Bible and in the way of salvation, that they may grow up into a firmly grounded Christian faith and into an intelligent and well-ordered Christian life. Then they will not be lightly turned aside by the wandering winds of doubt and temptation to sin.

The practice of catechisation involves *two important implications:* one, that of the child's relation to the Church as a member by reason of his baptism; the other, that of the profound responsibility of the Church to provide that the children already pledged to Christ by the faith of believing parents and the Church, shall be trained up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." They have need of the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit and that their spiritual life should be developed.

3. **Subject-matter of the catechism.** As the catechism is intended to be a help to the understanding of the Scriptures and their teachings, so it aims to present in brief and systematic form "the most important truths and doctrines of the divine word." These are explained simply and plainly that children may readily apprehend them. John Arndt, in one of his sermons, speaking of the value of the catechism, says, "The catechism is a brief instruction in the Chris-

* "Religious Education and the Public School," p. 66.

tian religion, and includes in itself the doctrine of the law of God, the Christian faith, the Lord's Prayer, the institutions of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which five parts are an epitome and kernel of the entire Holy Scriptures, for which reason it is called a little Bible."

The catechism thus treats (1) of the **Ten Commandments,** the center of God's ever-enduring and ever-binding moral law; (2) the **Apostles' Creed,** the great summary of the facts and doctrines of the Christian faith, universally confessed by the Church; (3) the **Lord's Prayer,** the "prayer that teaches to pray"; (4) **Baptism,** the sacrament which is the seal of forgiveness and the channel of regenerating grace; (5) the **Lord's Supper,** the sacramental channel of forgiving and sanctifying grace. These subjects form the vital foundations of the Christian faith and life of young and old.

4. **The use of the catechism.** First, catechisation should be practiced in the *home* as it once was. The little volume itself should have an honored place there, and then should be put to use. The fine old custom of our Lutheran forefathers ought to be maintained in the family circle, of gathering the children regularly for instruction in the catechism. This would be preparatory to the pastor's special work. Professor Gerberding very properly says:* "It ought not to be expected of a pastor that he be a school-master to oversee the memorizing of answers." The parents should see to that. "It is his office to expound and apply the truth, to make the doctrines clear to the minds of the learners, and to show how they are all related to the individual life.

The *pastor*, in his work of instruction, has an exceedingly fruitful field and his responsibility is correspondingly great. The children's minds and hearts are responsive and plastic and have a far greater readiness for serious thought upon the doctrines of the Christian faith than most people give them credit for possessing. The pastor needs, therefore, the very best methods. To secure the best results requires the memorizing of much of the catechism, but an intelligent comprehension of the truth must be sought at the same time. Public examinations before the congregation, at the conclusion of the course and preparatory to confirmation, are very helpful, and clinch the teaching.

The catechism should be used in every Lutheran Sunday school; and every Sunday school *teacher* should be familiar with it and give some instruction from it with every lesson. We shall refer to this again.

5. **Value of catechisation.** The experience of Lutheran pastors

* "The Way of Salvation," p. 71.

from the Reformation era proves that this system of religious nurture promotes the best development of a stable Christian faith. Knowledge of the gospel is the basis of stability in the Christian life. The ignorant are at the mercy of adverse winds of false teaching. Those who have been thoroughly indoctrinated are measurably secure, and continue steadfast in their piety and devotion to the Lutheran Church.

Catechisation, moreover, is a means to *spirituality*, for spirituality is the fruit of an intelligent apprehension of truth—the truth of Christ and His redeeming work. Catechisation opens this truth to the child effectively. The notion is a mistaken one that spirituality grows favorably in the soil of ignorance. The piety which is the noblest, deepest, strongest and most kindly, is fostered by an intelligent acquaintance with Christ and the gospel.

Catechisation, faithfully used, establishes religious faith and convictions in the child, helps lay the foundation of a consistent and ultimately mature Christian character, fortifies against error and temptation, and promotes a spiritual life. Herein is its value.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the primary agency employed by the Lutheran Church in child-nurture?
2. How and when did the practice of catechisation originate?
3. Who were the catechumens in the early Church?
4. Why did Luther write his catechisms?
5. What is the child catechumenate?
6. What is the aim of catechisation?
7. Is the Church responsible for the religious training of her children?
8. Of what subjects does Luther's catechism treat?
9. Where and how should the catechism be used?
10. Name some benefits from catechetical instruction.

LESSON IV

Covenant Relationship and Confirmation

In preceding lessons it has been stated that baptism brings the recipient into covenant relation with God. In the case of the baptized child, the sacrament is the first step in his Christian nurture, because spiritual growth is conditioned upon right relation to God.

1. **The covenant relation of adults.** Under the Old Testament dispensation, God established His covenant with His chosen people, Israel. God said to Abraham, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and thy seed after thee." (Gen. 17:7.) Again, "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Gen. 12:3.)

Under the Christian dispensation God has established His *covenant* of faith and salvation with His people through the sufferings and atoning sacrifice of Christ, and has sealed or assured His covenant by baptism. As circumcision, for the people of Israel, was the pledge that the God of Israel was the God of the individual, so *baptism* now is God's *pledge* that the Saviour of the Church is the Saviour of each individual. Baptism not only admits the person to church membership, but it establishes the *new covenant* with God. "As clearly taught by the Scriptures, it formally establishes, seals and sets forth the believer's status of direct and vital relation to God through faith in Jesus Christ."—*Valentine.*

Baptized persons, therefore, stand in *covenant relation* with God. On the divine side in this covenant, "God promises me the forgiveness of sin, life and salvation": that is, regenerating grace and justification. On the human side of the covenant, "I promise to renounce the world, the flesh and the devil, and to believe in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."—*Catechism.* The believer personally binds himself to the faith and service of God and His kingdom.

2. **The covenant relation of children.** All that has just been said with reference to the covenant relation with God into which Baptism introduces the recipient, applies directly to the children of believers. In the old dispensation children were clearly included as

members of the Jewish Church. See the passage quoted above (Gen. 17:7), as well as many others.

Likewise in the Christian dispensation, children are included in the covenant, and *infant membership* in the Church is established by baptism. We know this because in the New Testament there is no statement of repeal of the former conditions; because of the scope of Christ's great commission, the universal practice of the Church, and Christ's words in Matt. 19:14 and Mark 10:14. The Lutheran Church holds firmly to the teaching that infant baptism brings the children into a state of forgiveness and acceptance with God, and thus into covenant relation and church membership. Dr. Valentine says: "Their Church membership is essentially complete, not only because they are sealed in the Church covenant, but are under the renewing and saving grace of the Holy Spirit."

3. **Growth in grace.** In view of what has been said of the Christian covenant, our baptized children should be looked upon as already belonging to Christ. The germs of Christian faith and love are there. Baptism has brought them into especially favorable conditions. "Such children have a decided advantage upon and over those who have not in infancy been dedicated to Christ in holy baptism, for the latter have all those early years missed the rich blessings of the promised grace of baptism, and, too, they have not had the same guidance and spiritual advantages which those enjoyed who were early engrafted into Christ as the true Vine." *

Such children may and should *grow in grace* from earliest childhood to mental and spiritual maturity. Upon the parents and the Church rests the responsibility to watch and nurture their children prayerfully, that they may unfold into lives of holiness and Christian virtue, developing in goodness, gentleness, kindness and unselfishness. Baptism is the foundation upon which the Christian life of faith is built. It is the starting point from which should grow "the beautiful plant of child-trust and child-love, which flowers into devoted service for Christ and His Church.

• It is a *serious wrong* committed against the children to hold that they cannot be considered as in the kingdom without passing through violent changes or experiencing the painful repentance and conversion through which the hardened sinner must pass. But the child that is baptized and nurtured in the Lord should be taught that he belongs to Jesus, that the gospel blessings are his, and that in due time the full privileges of the Church will be conferred upon him. Kept under

* "The Child and the Church," L. M. Zimmerman, D. D., p. 31.

Christian influences and instruction he should be trained into Christian faith and life. In this nurture of the child the Sunday school and its teachers have an important part.

4. **Confirmation.** The goal of the religious nurture of the child is confirmation. This act usually takes place at that age where the young soul is emerging from childhood into the larger outlook and experience of youth, and marks the intelligent assumption of the duties and privileges of Christian discipleship, including the privilege especially of the Lord's Supper.

Confirmation is not a sacrament but a rite of the Church wherein the baptized child confirms and ratifies for himself his baptismal covenant. Dr. Zimmerman says:* "Confirmation for such children, born of and reared by Christian parents, is a solemn rite in which the individual, 'amidst the laying on of hands and prayers of the people,' confirms and ratifies the vows made in his behalf at baptism, and is strengthened and established in the faith by the Holy Spirit through the word and sacraments."

The beautiful and impressive ceremony of *confirmation* is the appropriate *crown* of all the preparatory nurture and spiritual training the child has received. He has been taught the plain and necessary truths of the gospel by his parents and his Sunday school teacher, while the pastor by catechetical instruction has led him into a more intelligent understanding of the way of salvation, of sin and grace, and of Christ's redeeming work on the cross. Of catechisation and its importance we have spoken in another lesson. The catechumens thus instructed have become enlightened, have drawn closer to their Saviour and have learned to love and trust Him. They are ready now to make a public profession of their faith before the Church. This is necessary, for Christ has said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32. See also Rom. 10:9, 10.)

In confirmation the catechumens voluntarily take the solemn vows of *church membership*. The pastor reminds them of the covenant of grace into which baptism has admitted them and addresses earnest admonitions to them. In response to the pastor's *first* question they make their confession of faith by the words of the Apostles' Creed. *Second*, they promise to renounce sin, to follow after Christ and to live and walk in faith. *Third*, they promise to be faithful members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and to use conscientiously the means of grace. The pastor gives the right hand of fellowship and leads the

* "The Child and the Church," Zimmerman, p. 22.

congregation in prayer in their behalf. Thus trained in childhood, thus consecrating themselves to Christ, and thus admitted in youth to the full privileges of the Church, they are not likely in manhood and womanhood to prove untrue to their Saviour. They have been well founded in the faith.

QUESTIONS

1. What was the nature of God's covenant with Israel?
2. Into what relation does Christian baptism bring the recipient?
3. What is the nature of this relation?
4. Are children admitted to covenant relation with God?
5. What is the teaching of the Lutheran Church as to this?
6. Are baptized children in a different state from that of others?
7. May baptized children grow in grace, and how?
8. Should baptized children be taught that they belong to Christ?
9. What is confirmation?
10. What is the nature of the vows given?

LESSON V

The Sunday School and the Baptized Child

We have considered the nature and significance of baptism, the covenant relation to God of the baptized children of the Church, and the function of catechisation in fitting the young for the intelligent and believing assumption of the privileges and obligations of Church membership. It is necessary that here we should consider the relation and obligation of the Sunday school to these children. The Sunday school is a valuable factor in the religious development of the child, and the teacher, in particular, is the personal agent of such nurture. Consider—

1. **The mission of the Sunday school.** The Sunday school is a *Bible school.* It is that division of the Church whose special object is to provide systematic instruction in the word of God for young and old. Its further mission (Prof. Van Ormer),* "is that of so ministering to the members of the school as to secure in the fullest possible measure the growth and development of their spiritual life, a development that shall include the public confession of the Christ and the dedication of the life to His service." As this author also says, the mission of the Bible school is not to be "degraded to the matter of large attendance, of large contributions, of having studied certain portions of the Bible, certain truths of geography, of history." All other considerations should be subordinated to the chief aim of giving that religious culture by means of the Scriptures which will lead the members of the school step by step into a higher Christian faith and life.

The *mission* of the Bible school is the mission of every teacher therein. The latter should ever keep this function of the school in clear view, studying the degree of Christian culture thus far attained by his pupils, in order that he may guide them further. Teachers should be careful not to fall into the common error that small children cannot receive much moral and religious truth, but ever bear in mind that they are capable of religious culture and of coming into a saving faith in Jesus Christ.

2. **The attitude to baptized children.** What should be the attitude of the Sunday school to our baptized children? There has been

* "Studies in Religious Nurture," p. 24.

a widespread view that the children, in the most beautiful and plastic years of life, belong to the world, and that, therefore, the object of the Sunday school is to convert them and lead them to Christ. This may be the case with those children who have been deprived of Christian training at home and the benefits of baptism, as also with sinful men and women who are led into the school, but in the view and teaching of the Lutheran Church it is not the case with the children of godly Christian homes, baptized and nurtured in the faith by parents, and who come into the Bible school.

These children *belong to Christ*, and, "with all their childish waywardness and restlessness, do generally love Jesus. They do trust in Him and are unhappy when they know they have committed a sin against Him. They do, when taught, pray to Him, and believe that He hears their prayers and loves them. Shall the teacher now begin to impress upon the minds and hearts of these little ones the idea that they are not yet Christ's, and that Christ has nothing to do with them, except to seek and call them, until they are converted?*

On the contrary, the teacher in particular, and the school in general, should keep clearly in mind the fact that these have been *sealed* unto God *in holy baptism.* The attitude of the school should be that of encouragement and helpfulness, while they should treat the little ones as Christ's children and members of the Church in blessed covenant relation. The teacher, when favorable opportunities arise, should remind the children of their relation to Christ and the Church, and encourage them to continue in the love of Jesus and in His service, at the same time holding before them the prospect of the full privileges of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and the Church, when they are confirmed. The children should be led to see that it is a joy and an honor to belong to Christ. In all these efforts parents, teachers and pastor need to work together in harmony.

It means much to the child to know that he is considered, not as an outsider, but as having a part in the Church and its blessings. The present child-study movement has led the secular schools into a "fuller appreciation of childhood," and a more sympathetic "regard for the laws for child-life."† As the Sunday school learns these lessons it will understand the religious nature of the child better and be of more intelligent and effective service in promoting his spiritual nurture. Especially do our Lutheran Bible schools need teachers who understand and appreciate our Lutheran view of baptism, in order

* Gerberding: "Way of Salvation," p. 58.
† Van Ormer.

that they may be able to assist our children wisely in the way of salvation.

3. **The use of the Bible.** The Bible, the word of God, is the natural food of the Christian. Therefore it is the natural and necessary food of the baptized and Christian child, as also of the unbaptized and untrained child whom we seek to lead into saving relation to Christ. Jesus laid upon Peter not only the commission, "Feed my sheep," but also "Feed my lambs." They are to be fed with the "sincere milk of the word." (1 Peter 2 : 2.)

The Bible has been given for man's instruction, spiritual enlightenment and good. It is the *chief factor*, religiously, in child-life, as the means employed to promote the religious nurture and moral development of the child. We have spoken in a previous lesson of the ways in which the word is to be applied to the growing child-mind, but the important fact, just at this point, is that the Sunday school teacher is the responsible agent in the Bible school for bringing the truth of the gospel to the child. His is a noble duty as he instructs in the Scriptures and simply and prayerfully explains God's love and grace in salvation as revealed in Jesus Christ, as opportunity arises.

Of course, the Bible material which is taught should be adapted in degree and measure to the child mind, for the younger children cannot receive what older ones may easily understand. From the earliest grades in the Sunday school, the word should be taught more and more as the capacity of the pupil increases. The teacher can assist the parents in guiding the earliest Bible reading of the child, but especially important is it that the children should commit Scripture to memory, for what is thus planted will bring forth good fruit. The supplemental work in the beginners', primary and junior grades is valuable to this end. Teachers in all the early grades of the Sunday school should not fail to see that their pupils have committed to memory such simple but great portions as the Ten Commandments, the 23d Psalm, the beatitudes, etc. They should use their Bibles in preference to the usual lesson helps.

4. **The catechism in the Sunday school.** The final preparation of the baptized children for confirmation and the fuller responsibilities of church membership, is that of *catechisation*. This is usually considered as the special work of the pastor, but the catechism should have a place in the Sunday school and in the work of the teacher. The catechism is too valuable and useful to be neglected here. Our children need not only the general explanation and study of the Scriptures, but also the particular explanation of the great Bible doc-

trines which form the heart of our Christian religion and which are outlined in this little book.

There should be a brief (five or ten minutes) *supplemental lesson* in the catechism either before or after the regular lesson, given by the pastor or superintendent, or, better, by the teachers in the classes. The children are thus prepared for the special work of the pastor. It follows, therefore, that the teacher in a Lutheran school should be familiar with the catechism and understand its purpose and contents.

Such catechetical work in the Sunday school is another important factor in the religious nurture of the children, and should not be neglected, as is now the case in most schools. It does much to anchor them in the faith.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the mission of the Sunday school?
2. What is the function of the teacher in the Bible school?
3. Should the baptized children be treated as if unsaved?
4. How should the Sunday school regard them?
5. What is the duty of the teacher in view of the child's covenant relation?
6. Is there need of a right understanding of the Lutheran view of baptism?
7. How should the Bible be used for the nurture of the child?
8. Should Scripture be committed to memory?
9. Should the catechism be used in the Sunday school?
10. What methods may be employed in teaching the catechism?
11. What is the value of catechetical instruction in the school?

LESSON VI

The Lord's Supper

In tracing the progress of the nurture of the child in the Church, we have considered the means of grace and their application, namely: the word and its application, the sacrament of baptism, the covenant relationship of the baptized child, his further religious training by catechisation, and confirmation, by which he is admitted into full membership in the Church. In confirmation he has received the right hand of fellowship and has been given authority to join with the congregation in the reception of the Lord's Supper. And now, for the first time, the young Christian approaches the holy table of the Lord to receive the sacrament. What does the Lord's Supper mean to him, as it touches his spiritual nurture?

1. **Nature of the sacrament.** Review carefully what has been said of the sacraments as means of grace, in the opening section of Lesson II. on "Baptism." They are special ordinances appointed by our Lord as "organs for applying the word" and as channels by which He bestows and seals His grace. Their efficacy is dependent upon the word of God and their benefits are dependent upon the faith of the recipients.

Baptism is the sacrament of initiation and is the ground upon which is built the new life of the Christian. The *Lord's Supper* serves to the further and continued nourishment of the new and higher life of the young believer. Therefore, while baptism is applied but once, the Lord's Supper is given frequently that it may support the Christian in continued fellowship with Christ, and in his conflict with sin and temptation, until he comes into the full maturity of a holy life and character.

As remarked in an earlier chapter, the *sacraments* are *vital elements* in God's plan of salvation and are of great importance in the general culture of the Christian life, and in the nurture of children and youth. This is especially true of the Lord's Supper. The religious nurture of the child is not completed when he is confirmed; he is morally prepared for that deeper culture of which this sacrament is one of the appointed means. It is important, therefore, that our children should have an understanding of the Lord's Supper proportionate to their age.

Sunday school teachers will surely have a deep personal interest in their scholars when they come to the step of publicly confessing Christ in *confirmation*, and will find special opportunities to supplement the pastor's instruction, by assisting the children to an understanding of the sacrament to which they are to be admitted. It is important that the teacher should be well trained in the knowledge of this doctrine, especially in view of the frequent misunderstanding or ignorance of its meaning. To many people it is only a beautiful and ancient ceremony, and to others simply a symbol designed to awaken sacred emotions and memories of an absent Saviour and His sufferings and death. Every Lutheran Sunday school teacher should know that the sacrament is more than this and should be familiar with the teaching of the Lutheran Church concerning the doctrine.

2. **Origin of the sacrament.** The Lord's Supper is not of human origin. It is not the invention of some man, nor was it formulated by any Church Council in the early days of Christianity. It has been ordained by our Lord, the Son of God. Coming to us with the stamp of Christ's authority and wisdom upon it, it claims our reverent obedience and use.

Furthermore, it was instituted "in the night in which He was betrayed." (1 Cor. 11 : 23.) At His last meeting with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion, on the eve of His redeeming sacrifice, and under the most solemn circumstances, He laid the command of the sacrament upon them. This leads us to believe that it cannot be separated from the saving benefits of His death.

3. **Form of the sacrament.** In its external form, the Lord's Supper consists of (1) bread and wine, which are the external and visible elements essential to the sacramental character. (2) The words of institution (Matt. 26 : 26-28 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 23-26, etc.), by which the elements of bread and wine are consecrated to their holy purpose. This act does not cause any miraculous physical change in the bread and wine as the Roman Catholic Church teaches ; but the word of God,—the word of institution and of gracious promise,—is essential to the power and efficacy of the sacrament. (3) The distribution and partaking of the bread and wine, which act completes the external form of the Supper.

4. **The design.*** This sacrament was doubtless intended by our Lord as "an auxiliary form of the means of grace," by which believers might receive continued help in the Christian life, be strengthened in faith, and be kept in covenant relation.

* Valentine : "Christian Theology," Vol. II., pp. 338-340.

(1) It was designed to take the place of the Passover feast of the old dispensation. The circumstances of institution suggest this, as also 1 Cor. 5:7.

(2) There can be no question that Christ intended the sacrament to be a *memorial* of Himself and His atoning sacrifice. He said, "Do this in remembrance of me."

(3) Its purpose is *confessional*. By means of it the Christian may frequently make confession of his faith in Christ before men. (1 Cor. 11:26; Matt. 10:32.)

(4) Its significance further lies in the fact that it is the *pledge and seal* of the forgiveness of our sins. (Matt. 26:28.)

(5) It brings believers into a close *Christian fellowship*, cementing the unity of the Church. (1 Cor. 10:17.)

(6) The essential significance of the Lord's Supper lies in its design as "*a communion of the body and blood of Christ*" (1 Cor. 10:16), bringing us into a real fellowship with Him, by which the fellowship established in baptism is continually supported and strengthened. This is the chief and deepest purpose of the sacrament. The others are of lesser importance.

5. **The Real Presence.** The Lutheran view of the Lord's Supper is characterized as the doctrine of the **Real Presence,** *i. e.*, the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament. Luther says of the sacrament, "It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, given to us Christians to eat and drink, as it was instituted by Christ Himself."—*Catechism.* The Augsburg Confession declares: "In regard to the Lord's Supper, they (the churches) teach that the body and blood of Christ are truly present, and are dispensed to the communicants in the Lord's Supper." (Art. 10.)

This is not the Roman Catholic view of *Transubstantiation*, which teaches that the bread and wine are by a miracle transformed into the actual body and blood of Christ, and are no longer bread and wine. According to the Lutheran view the elements remained unchanged, but are the medium in, with and under which the body and blood of Christ are conveyed to the believing communicant. The elements conveyed are heavenly elements, the glorified, spiritual and exalted body and blood of Christ.

This doctrine of the *Real Presence* is what gives the sacrament all its force, and causes it to be so rich and precious to the Lutheran believer. Christ's words, "This is my body—my blood," are not empty forms, but rich with meaning. Christ gives Himself to us for our for-

giveness and salvation. The sacrament is a channel of grace and life to us.

6. **Significance of the sacrament in child-nurture.** The important bearing of the Lord's Supper on the religious nurture of the children must be clear. It continues the blessed work of grace which was begun in baptism. It serves for the further and deeper nourishment of the new life of the confirmed youth. The entire gospel is in the Holy Supper, and as the young church member comes to it and partakes of it in the solemn gathering of the congregation, his soul is fed with the living Bread of life. The repetition of the sacrament meets the recurring and continued spiritual hunger of the soul, and helps him to grow in grace. It holds him in the bond of faith and in loving fellowship with the Saviour.

While we should keep the children in *faithful and regular attendance* at public worship where they may be refreshed by the word of God, it is also important that our Lutheran homes and schools should direct them to the Lord's Supper, which is the *culminating act of worship.* They should be taught the meaning and value of the sacrament and its necessity for the support and growth of their Christian life. Here the Sunday school teacher will find opportunity to do much good for the children whom he teaches.

QUESTIONS

1. What special privilege does Confirmation give to the new church member?
2. What is a sacrament?
3. What purpose does the Lord's Supper serve after baptism?
4. Is the religious nurture of the child complete when he is confirmed?
5. Is the Lord's Supper a human institution?
6. When and by whom was this sacrament instituted?
7. What is the external form of the sacrament?
8. What is the design or purpose of the Lord's Supper?
9. What is its deepest and most important purpose?
10. Explain the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence.
11. What value has this sacrament in the religious nurture of the child?
12. Is it important that children should be taught the meaning of the sacrament?
13. What is the responsibility of the teacher as to this sacrament?

LESSON VII

The Preparatory Service

The religious nurture of our children demands that very early they should be impressed with the solemnity of their approach to the Lord's Table, and with the high importance of the service of **Confession and Absolution,** known as the Preparatory Service. In many of our English-speaking congregations this service has been much neglected, comparatively few of the members attending, and the church life has suffered in consequence. In this respect the German Lutheran churches set a good example, for few of their members presume to commune without first having attended the service of confession and absolution. In the beginning our Lutheran children should have impressed upon them the spiritual benefits of the Preparatory Service and the necessity of attending it always. In this, Sunday school teachers should cooperate with pastor and parents, for this service is a spiritual factor in proper Christian nurture.

1. **The reason for the Preparatory Service.** The reason for the service of confession and absolution lies in the nature and character of the Lord's Supper, to which we attach very high importance and sanctity. The Lutheran Church regards this sacrament as of especial value as a medium of blessing and forgiving grace, because in it the believer is brought into intimate fellowship with his Lord. It is "a high mystery which bears in itself a power to bless and to destroy."

It is, therefore, a *solemn act* to approach the altar of the Lord. Hence it should not be approached lightly or without sufficient and appropriate preparation. Such spiritual preparation the Preparatory Service is designed to provide. The service is not peculiar to the Lutheran Church, for similar usages prevail in other branches of the Christian faith. Neither is it new, but in "harmony with apostolic injunction and primitive usage." Paul urges (1 Cor. 11 : 28), "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." He also warns against unworthy participation in the sacrament (1 Cor. 11 : 26-29), which brings the guilt of the "body and blood of the Lord" and damnation.

"The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," an ancient document

discovered by Bryennios, commands (chap. 14 : 2) "On the Lord's Day do you assemble and break bread, and give thanks, *after confessing your transgressions*, in order that your sacrifice may be pure. But every man that hath controversy with his friend, let him not come together with you, *until they be reconciled*, that your sacrifice may not be profaned."

2. **Worthy communicants.** We should approach the Lord's Table "worthily." Paul says, "Let a man examine himself." Let him search and see if he has the proper qualifications, if he have knowledge "to discern the Lord's body"; that is, to discriminate between the bread of the sacrament and ordinary bread; between this and common meals; to perceive its deeper spiritual meaning and application. Let him see if he has true penitence for his sins; true faith in the Lord Jesus, and a sincere desire to live the life of a Christian.

Though a man feel himself to be personally unworthy, yet if he is conscious of his spiritual needs and is sincere and earnest in his penitence, faith and Christian love, he may come worthily. He should not remain away. *Unworthy communicants* are the impenitent, the hypocritical, the openly wicked, and unbelievers and doubters towards the willingness and ability of Christ to save.

3. **Form of the Preparatory Service.** It is not an ordinary service merely preceding the Communion, but a specific service in which every part assists in spiritual preparation. Dr. Gerberding says* our Preparatory Service is "to assist the communicant in this self-examination. Its great object is to enable the communicant to realize his own sinfulness, to deepen in him true penitence and longing for forgiveness, and also to aid him in appropriating and rejoicing in the full and free forgiveness of Christ."

The service is embodied in **a threefold form :**

(1) **Self-examination.** This is the act of the individual, for which he is assisted and prepared by the presentation of the gospel and of the spirit and law of the Christian life, as set forth in the commandments of God and revealed in the life and mission of our Lord. This self-examination may be private, but the communicant is assisted by the public service.

The *opening exhortation* of the Preparatory Service is designed to lead us to examine our hearts and inquire diligently "into the reality of our repentance, faith and holy living," and thus to see if we are able to approach the Lord's Table worthily. Using the language of the

* "Way of Salvation," p. 121.

Scriptures, it directs the attention of the communicant to (*a*) the sinfulness of the heart; (*b*) the necessity of repentance; (*c*) the promise of the forgiveness of sins; (*d*) the necessity of holiness of life. A penitential psalm, the fifty-first, is then repeated. If the communicant has followed these thoughts prayerfully and thoughtfully he will not fail to look into his heart searchingly. The hymns and the sermon have previously ministered to the same end.

(2) The second act of the congregation is **confession**. This is threefold. On the part of the congregation is a united, audible and public confession of sin, of faith in Christ, and of an earnest purpose to hate and forsake sin and to walk with God.

(*a*) The **confession of sin.** The pastor asks the question: "Do you confess in the presence of Almighty God, who searcheth the heart, that you are by nature sinful and unclean, and that by omitting to do good and actually doing evil, you have in many ways grieved and offended your God and Saviour, and thereby justly deserve His condemnation? If this be your conviction, confess it by saying, 'Yes.'"

The confession of sin is *necessary*, for, if made sincerely and honestly, it is an evidence of true repentance, which opens the way to forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). It testifies also to an humble and contrite heart which is acceptable to God.

(*b*) **Confession of faith.** The pastor asks: "Do you truly believe that Jesus Christ has come into the world to save sinners, and that all who believe on His name have the forgiveness of sins? Do you, therefore, earnestly desire to be delivered from all your sins, and are you confident that your heavenly Father is gracious unto you and doth, for Christ's sake, forgive your sins and cleanse you from all unrighteousness? If this be your faith, confess it by saying 'Yes.'"

The confession of faith naturally and logically follows the confession of sin. Having made the latter we next look for forgiveness to Christ, who, we believe, has both the power and the will to forgive and to save. The public confession of our faith is necessary to our acknowledgment by our Saviour before our heavenly Father. (Matt. 10:32, 33.)

(*c*) **Confession** of "sincere intention or purpose of new obedience." The pastor asks: "Do you earnestly resolve henceforth to submit yourselves to the influence of the Holy Spirit and by His aid to obey the divine word, so as to hate and forsake all evil, to walk as in God's presence and in love to your neighbor, and to strive daily after holi-

ness of heart and life? If this be your purpose, confess it by saying 'Yes.'"

The declaration of the *purpose of obedience* is an act of will, indicating renewed consecration and a full surrender to Christ for salvation and guidance in the Christian life. This is the logical fruit of faith and its public profession, for faith without the works of obedience is dead.

Following the public threefold confession is the *prayer of penitence and confession* to God.

(3) The third and final act in the Preparatory Service is the **absolution.** The pastor makes the announcement of mercy and forgiveness, and continues: "And upon this humble confession which you have made, as a minister of the Church of Christ, and by His authority, I declare unto you who do repent and believe in Him, the entire forgiveness of all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The congregation then join in the Lord's Prayer.

The minister has *no power of his own* to remit sin, but as the *ambassador of Christ* (2 Cor. 5 : 20), possesses the *delegated authority* to declare the promise and the assurance of forgiveness; *i. e.*, he possesses the "power of the keys." (Matt. 16 : 19; Luke 10 : 16.) The word which he announces possesses effective power as the key to the kingdom.

4. The **service of confession and absolution** prepares the believing communicant to partake of the Lord's Supper worthily. It should not under any circumstances be neglected. Especially is this service *a part of the spiritual nurture of the children* of the Church. It is needful that its spiritual value and necessity should be impressed upon the catechumens and newly confirmed. The failure to plant respect for and understanding of this service in the children, is, in part, responsible for the small numbers found at the Preparatory Service in most churches. Sunday school teachers may assist the pastor and parents greatly by explaining the confessional service to their pupils and its bearing as a factor in religious nurture.

QUESTIONS

1. In what spirit should the Lord's Supper be approached?
2. What is the purpose of the Preparatory Service?
3. Do the apostles enjoin preparation for the Sacrament?

4. What does the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" direct?

5. Who are "worthy communicants"?

6. Should a believer remain away from the sacrament if humbly conscious of unworthiness?

7. What is the form of the Preparatory Service?

8. What is self-examination, and how is it promoted?

9. What is the threefold character of the confessional act of the congregation?

10. Are the confession of sin and of faith necessary? Why?

11. What is the absolution?

12. What measure of authority does the minister possess?

13. Is it right to neglect the Preparatory Service?

LESSON VIII

The Church and Her Mission

The Christian Church is the appointed *dispenser of the means of grace* to penitent sinners and believing disciples. Therefore the Church is a supremely important agency in religious culture, both for adults and for children and youth. Parents and teachers who are indifferent whether or not the children are brought early to the house of God and kept under the influence of the Church, have fallen into a grave mistake. The necessity of parents and Sunday school teachers as well as pastors, having such correct ideas of the Church and her mission, that they may be able to plant proper respect and love for the Church in the hearts of their children and pupils, should be apparent. The spiritual nurture offered by the Church to the child dare not be neglected. But why do we take this ground? What is the Church?

1. **The meaning of the word church.** The usual term for "church" in the New Testament is "ekklesia" (Greek), from "ekkalein," "to call together." Ordinarily its meaning is that of "an assembly of citizens called together into some public place"; in its ecclesiastical meaning it designates "an assembly of Christians, called out or together for the worship of God." The members of the Church are the "ekkletoi," the called, the "elect." The word "ekklesia," in its New Testament usage, may mean either the Church in general or a single congregation.

2. **The origin of the Church.** The Christian Church is of divine origin, not human. "Nothing was more unlikely, no supposition is more untenable," says Martensen,* "than the notion that the Church might have been introduced into the world merely by a series of human impulses and outward circumstances, of pious recollections and holy feelings; or, again, by a number of sporadic, vague and instinctive movements and agitations of the divine Spirit."

Essentially, the *Christian Church* (the successor of the Old Testament Church), was founded by Christ during His life on earth, but, while Christ is always its essential beginning, center and life, historically and actually it was ushered into the world by the Pentecostal gift of the "fullness of the Spirit." The outward, aggressive begin-

* "Dogmatics," p. 336.

ning of the Church's evangelizing energy was in a definite act, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. It was established by inspiration. Its life and energy were not those of a human will, but those of the Divine Will.

3. **The idea of the Church.** Jesus uses the terms, "kingdom of God," "kingdom of heaven," or simply "kingdom," far oftener than "church." Though these terms are closely related, there is a distinction between them. Dr. Valentine says:* "The kingdom of God stands for a new order of things in the world under redeeming provision, saving grace and mediatorial sovereignty," its establishment and progress being a "spiritual reality." The Church "is its great product on earth, the visible body of believers in organized fellowship," the chief historical visible manifestation of the kingdom.

In order that His proclamation of salvation might be continued after His death, Jesus chose, called out and sent out *twelve apostles*, and he designates this separate community of His disciples as *the Church*. (Matt. 16 : 18.) In their writings, especially those of Paul, Peter and John, the Church is represented as the fellowship of Christ's disciples, "the fellowship of the saints," "the household of God" (Eph. 2 : 19), that is, those called out from the world to serve God. The Church is spoken of as chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1 : 4 ; 1 Peter 1 : 2) ; and as nourished and cherished by Him. (Eph. 5 : 29, 30.) It is called the House, the City and the Temple of God. This spiritual temple is composed of all God's people and is His dwelling-place. (1 Cor. 3 : 17 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 16.) The Church, further, is spoken of as the Bride of Christ (Eph. 5 : 31, 32 ; Rev. 21 : 9, 10), and as His fullness. (Eph. 1 : 23.)

Those who constitute the Church are, according to Christ, "the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth" (Matt. 5 : 13, 14), the instruments of spiritual illumination and salvation. Uniformly in the New Testament, the Church is represented as the company of the saved, but the Apostle Paul is the one who develops the doctrine most fully. He speaks of the believers as "the body of Christ," and develops this idea in the twelfth chapter of 1st Corinthians. The letter to the Ephesians also presents the thought of the Church in Christ Jesus, one body.

Christ's doctrine of the kingdom and Paul's doctrine of the body of Christ together give us the *idea of the Church*. It is the whole community of believers who do the will of God and who are in the truest spiritual sense members of the body of Christ. It is the nature of the

* "Christian Theology," Vol. II., pp. 369, 370.

Christian religion that it should lead individual Christians into personal relations of fellowship with God and then into similar relations with one another, because of the common bonds of love and faith which they hold toward Christ. They are, therefore, the "communion of saints." The Augsburg Confession declares (Art. 7), that "the Church is the congregation of saints, in which the gospel is correctly taught and the sacraments properly administered."

4. **The visible and invisible Church.** We recognize a distinction between the two. The *visible Church* is the external and visible union of all baptized and professed followers of Christ, among whom may be many pretended and nominal Christians. The *invisible Church* is the inward and spiritual communion of all sincere believers in Christ, who are His true and faithful followers through the new birth. The true Church must assume the visible form, however, in order to declare the gospel, to edify believers by the word and sacraments, and to engage in the manifold Christian activities of the age.

5. **Attributes of the Church.** The attributes or characteristics of the Church are—

(1) **Unity;** * because believers have one faith, with all their difference, and one Head and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is a spiritual unity. (Eph. 4 : 1-6.)

(2) **Holiness;** because Christ, the Head, is holy, and her principles of life and service and her aims are holy. (2 Tim. 1 : 9.)

(3) **Universality;** for the Church includes true believers of every age, race, nation and condition. (Rom. 1 : 14.)

(4) The Church is **apostolic;** because founded upon the primitive and apostolic doctrine, the statement of which is furnished in the authentic records of the New Testament. (Eph. 2 : 20.)

6. **The marks or "notes"** of the Church by which the visible Church is distinguished, are the pure teaching of the word of God and the proper administration of the sacraments. (Augsburg Confession, Art. 7.) The Church has been entrusted with the possession and the dispensing of the means of grace, which our Lord has ordained. The Church is distinguished and recognized, therefore, wherever the word of God is preached and taught plainly, without omission of any of its doctrines or unwarranted additions thereto; and when the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are administered (not omitted), according to the plain words of institution and in the spirit and intent of Christ. The Church offering these channels of forgiveness and saving grace is *God's instrument of religious nurture.* The

* See Augsburg Conf., Art. VII., and Melanchthon's "Apology," ch. iv.

young and receptive minds and hearts of our children, above all others, need this spiritual nurture by and through the Church. The study of the doctrine of the Church should open the eyes of teachers to this need.

7. **The Church's mission.** The first desire of the new life in Christ's followers is communion with believers, which is realized in the Church; the second is the outreaching toward the unsaved with the longing to give them the gospel. The great central object of Christianity is the redemption of mankind. For this Jesus came, lived and died. The Church is the divinely-ordained means for the diffusion of the gospel and the application of redemption to sinful men.

The Church's destiny is seen in the promised triumph of the kingdom of God and the world-wide diffusion of the gospel. Her mission is to bring to Christ all men anywhere who will believe and confess Him as Lord. (Phil. 2:9-11; Rom. 10:12-15.)

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Church an agency in religious nurture?
2. What is the meaning of the word "Church"?
3. Is the Church of human or divine origin?
4. How did the Church originate?
5. What is the distinction between the Church and the kingdom of God?
6. By what terms does the Bible designate the Church? Give some references.
7. What is the Church?
8. What is the distinction between the visible and invisible Church?
9. What are the attributes of the Church?
10. What are the marks or notes of the true Church?
11. What is the Church's mission? Her destiny?
12. What bearing has the doctrine of the Church on child-nurture?

LESSON IX

The Church's Claim: Reasons for Uniting with the Church

The Christian Church lays claim upon every individual, old or young, for his membership in the Church and then for his affection, intelligent loyalty and faithful service. The Church and her ministry are constantly voicing an earnest appeal to men not only to believe in Christ and to accept Him as their Saviour, but also to unite with the Church. Why? What grounds exist for the insistence upon church membership?

Sunday school teachers, having the mission of promoting the *Christian nurture of the children* and youth in their charge, must make it their object to lead them, one and all, into full membership in the Church. They must, therefore, be prepared to give their pupils *good and sufficient reasons* for such a step as church membership and for the Church's claim upon them. What are some of these reasons?

1. **The Church is a divine institution.** It was founded by our Lord and empowered by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. Its mission is to proclaim divine and absolute truth and to preach Christ and His gospel. Therefore, its claims are lifted at once immeasurably above those of any other society or organization. The Church, moreover, speaks to us with authority through the inspired word of God. Her claim should be respected and heeded, therefore.

2. **The Church is the spiritual body of Christ.** Paul declares that the Church is Christ's body—"the Church, which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." (Eph. 1:22, 23.) Believers are not independent units, but are members one of another. (1 Cor. 6:15; 12:12; Eph. 4:25; 5:30.) The Church is an organism, of which Christ is the Head and soul, the members being parts of the body and drawing their life from Him. Christ and His Church cannot be separated. Therefore, if we would abide in Christ (John 15:4-6), and continue in fellowship with Him, it is necessary to be members or parts of His spiritual body, the Church.

3. **Salvation is through the Church.** Since there is no salvation except through Christ, that salvation must be through the Church. This follows from what has just been said. The apostles never lose sight of the fact that "there is none other name under heaven given

among men, whereby we must be saved," except that of Jesus. (Acts 4:12; Phil. 2:9-11.) Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and "I am the door." But the "name" of Christ and the "way" of salvation are offered by and through the Church.

If we believe in Christ we must *confess Him* before men, and should do so openly and boldly. This is the natural thing for the Christian believer to do, and it is the necessary thing. Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 10:32, 33; see also Rom. 10:9, 10.) It is the emphatic teaching of the New Testament that those who would be Christians must come out from the world, separate themselves from it (2 Cor. 6:17), deny themselves, confess Christ and be identified with His disciples in spiritual fellowship and works.

Our conclusion must be that under all ordinary circumstances there is *no salvation outside the Church.* We can conceive of some extraordinary circumstances, such as necessary deprivation of the ministration of the Church by reason of great distance, etc., under which men might repent, believe and be saved outside her borders. But no man who lives under the shadow of the Church or within reach of her ministrations can refuse or neglect her call and claim with right or safety. This is sufficient reason for uniting with the Church. No one whose heart is right with God will refuse to do so.

4. **The Church possesses the means of grace.** These are the word and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the means or channels provided by our Lord, through which He wills that grace and forgiveness should be offered and given to believers. We have already seen the importance of these in the way of salvation and in the promotion of religious nurture.

The means of grace cannot be found outside the Church, but have been entrusted to her (not to the invisible but the visible Church), and her mission is to dispense them to men. It is true that the Bible is and should be read outside the church membership, but the Church alone preaches and applies the word, while she alone offers and dispenses the sacraments. It follows that we can have part in the full privileges of the means of grace only as members of the visible Church.

5. **The refusal or neglect to confess Christ** in the visible Church and in the use of the means of grace is an *act of disobedience and unbelief.* Obedience is the fruit of a genuine faith. The promises of God certainly do not belong to those who willfully remain without the Church, in disobedience to the Lord's plain commands, and in un-

belief ; but they belong to those who are in the Church, obedient, believing and faithful. Despisers of the Church and the covenant of grace are described by Paul in Eph. 2 : 12 as "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," etc.

6. **The Church is an organization for service.** We have come to appreciate as never before both the blessedness and the glory of "service," when given to God and humanity. Love leads to service. The Christian who loves God will want the opportunity to serve his Lord. He finds it in the Church. The youth who cherishes noble aspirations for the largest usefulness in his life finds the broadest field for doing good and helping to lift up humanity in the Christian Church.

The *world needs the Church.* The latter has been the mightiest leaven for good the world has ever experienced, slowly and quietly working a great transformation toward better moral and social conditions in both the individual and collective life of humanity. This influence of the Church has been making life better, purer, more kind, more unselfish, more helpful in the spirit of Christian brotherhood. Our great philanthropies, charities, missions and educational movements are the fruit of the Church's service. We should not fail to point our young Christians to the Church as offering them the greatest field for effective service in uplifting humanity and in saving their souls. The Church needs them for her work.

7. **Spiritual nurture by the Church is a necessity**. Next after the Christian home, the Church and membership therein are the most effective agencies for promoting the religious nurture of our children. This is the logical conclusion of our studies throughout Part II. of this volume. As we turn our attention to the children, growing up in our homes and Sunday schools, and ask for the means which will best train them in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and which will keep them in saving union with Christ, we must answer that it is in the possession of the spiritual privileges of church membership.

The *opening child mind* must be fed upon the word of God, the primary means of grace, both by teaching in the Sunday school and by preaching from the pulpit. He must be kept in covenant relation and in close spiritual touch with Christ by baptism and the Lord's Supper. He needs the constant fellowship of other Christians in church membership to encourage and support him in his Christian life. The influence of the church life and the atmosphere of Christian worship are necessary especially in the formative years of the lives of children and youth, that they may be turned in the right direction, grounded in the faith and established in Christian character.

Particularly important and necessary to proper religious culture is it that the children should be led *early* to recognize and *acknowledge the Church's claim* upon them. There should be no wasted or lost years. Here the Sunday school teacher's influence may be very valuable, and especially in the case of those pupils who have no Christian parents to direct them to Christ. That teacher is the successful teacher who is able wisely and effectively to guide his pupils into the membership of the Church and into the experience of an active Christian life. Therefore, he should know why the Church claims the service of the young soul.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the Church's claim upon young and old?
2. What should the teacher be prepared to do?
3. Give four reasons why our children should be directed into church membership.
4. Is the Church a divine or human institution?
5. What is the Church's relation to Christ?
6. Is there salvation outside the Church?
7. Are the means of grace found outside the Church?
8. Is the public confession of Christ necessary?
9. Is the Church an effective agency for the religious nurture of the children?
10. Is the Church's nurture necessary? If so, why?
11. What responsibility rests upon the Sunday school teacher in this regard?

PART THREE

THINGS PRACTICAL IN LIFE AND SERVICE

PART III

Things Practical in Life and Service

LESSON I

The Christian Life

1. **Introductory.** The Lutheran Church, in her concern for the proper Christian nurture of her own children, is convinced that they should be given religious instruction covering Lutheran Church history and the application and use of the means of grace. Thus will they be trained to be loyal members of their mother Church and will be led into a firm anchorage in the Christian faith and the service of Christ. These fields have been outlined in Parts I. and II., in order that Sunday school teachers and others interested in child-nurture may be helped in their work.

It is equally important that the children should early be given a **view of the Christian life** and its practical duties. The believer's covenant relation with God reaches beyond the question of saving faith and touches his daily life and conduct. The Christian life is the expected and necessary fruit of a Christian faith. The gospel lays upon the believer corresponding obligations and duties, in which the child should have instruction. The great ethical teachings and principles of Christianity also must be carefully instilled in the expanding soul. It is needful, therefore, that teachers give earnest attention to the practical things that touch the religious development of children and youth.

2. **What is it to be a Christian?** The term "Christian" (*Christianos*) means a "follower of Christ." He belongs to Jesus Christ, for he has yielded and consecrated himself to Him.

To be a Christian is (1) **to renounce sin** and all fellowship with it, together with "the world, the flesh and the devil" (1 Thess. 1 : 9); (2) **to be a follower of Christ,** conformed to His will and dedicated to His service; (3) **to receive Christ** into the heart and life—*i. e.*, to receive His word to enlighten and guide (Ps. 119 : 105), His Spirit to sanctify and His very life as the vital, molding principle of the new

life; (4) **to profess His name** and to identify one's self with His Church.

Christians are called in the Scriptures **believers** (Acts 5 : 14), **brethren** (Acts 9 : 30), **disciples** (learners), **servants** (Rom. 6 : 22), and **saints** (Rom. 1 : 7).

3. **The Christian life.** The Christian life is the "new life" of the believer who has been born again and brought into a living faith in Christ. The power of sin and the flesh has been broken (Rom. 6 : 12-14), and he has learned to "fear, love and trust in God above all things." It is the "new life" as distinguished from that which is characteristic of the worldly and the wicked.

The Christian has become **spiritual** and now minds "the things of the Spirit" (Rom. 8 : 5, 6). His daily walk is determined by the rule of the Holy Spirit, and righteousness and holiness have become the rule of life. Bearing the "image of Christ," he lives in trusting fellowship with the Saviour and in faithful service in the kingdom of God and the Church.

4. **Its beginning.** Strictly speaking, the Christian life has its beginning in God, for it is His desire and will that all men should repent and be saved. (John 3 : 16; Acts 17 : 30; 2 Peter 3 : 9.) Believers have been called by the grace of God through the gospel, and having obeyed the call, have become the chosen or elect.

Practically the Christian life **begins** with the covenant relation of baptism, and therefore in early childhood. The Lutheran Church teaches that baptized children may grow up as children of grace from infancy, as did Samuel under the old covenant. The children who have been brought up in the nurture of the Lord by parents and the Church should be taught that they belong to Christ already and should now trust Jesus and serve Him as Christians. The Christian life, in its larger outlook, will begin with confirmation and its public profession of faith.

In the case of the wicked and unbelieving who have been outside of God's covenant of grace, it begins with repentance, conscious faith, conversion and the new birth.

5. **Its meaning.** The Christian life implies, on the part of believers, both their separation from the world and their consecration to God, and that they have turned away from the worship of idols and from every known sin to the blessed service of Christ and righteousness. (2 Cor. 6 : 17; Rev. 9 : 20, 21.)

The Christian life means also the **acceptance of Jesus Christ** as personal Saviour, with conscious faith in Him. (Acts 16 : 31.) This

faith "is the confident persuasion that Jesus is the Son of God" (*Professor Weidner*), and that His gospel of salvation is true. It is important that the children of the Church at the very beginning of their active Christian life, should be led to understand that their Christian profession is also a matter of daily Christian living, in faithful and abiding fellowship with Christ. (John 15 : 1-11.)

6. **Its progress.** A true Christian life will grow and advance. It does not begin full grown and of strong, mature character. We begin as learners, weak, as "babes in Christ." (1 Cor. 3 : 1.) We must "grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour" (2 Pet. 3 : 18), and increase in strength and faith. As Christians, seeking daily cleansing from sin and defilement, we progress towards the fullness of spiritual maturity.

This growth of the soul into the likeness and righteousness of Christ is called **sanctification.** "Sanctification, sometimes called renovation, is technically employed to express the continuation of the divine work begun in regeneration, whereby the power of the new life is steadily increased and depravity and sin are more and more overcome in both heart and life." * (Mark 4 : 28 ; 1 Thess. 5 : 23.)

7. **Its fruits.** The object of Christ's mission, so far as it touched the ethical side of human life and character, was to reproduce in all His followers His own moral image. This is the practical effect of the gospel. They will live a Christian life, doing all the good they can. Such a life involves two elements, believing and doing. "Faith without works is dead." (James 2 : 20.)

Faith must bring forth its natural fruits—deeds of love and kindness and blameless character. (James 1 : 27.) The Christian, as a child of God, should always do those things that are pleasing to his Master, while he ever seeks to give honor and obedience to his heavenly Father. With the love of God in his heart he will keep himself holy and unspotted. (2 Peter 3 : 11.)

8. **Its ethics.** The Christian life cannot be considered apart from ethics, for godliness and piety form the rich and deep soil from which Christian moral character springs. Indeed, there can be no complete and acceptable Christian life without the fruit of sound ethical principles and conduct. Therefore the religious nurture of the children of the Church requires persevering and careful instruction in morals. Religion and ethics must be taught together, and no pains should be spared to plant securely the highest moral standards in the children.

This is all the more needful in view of the manifold temptations to

* Valentine : "Christian Theology," Vol. II., p. 272.

turn aside from these strict moral standards, which constantly beset the path of the young. In the midst of the prevalent sins of dishonesty, intemperance, licentiousness, covetousness and hatred, they should be insistently taught the Christian virtues—patience, diligence, honesty, truthfulness, temperance, purity in thought and deed, courtesy, etc., together with brotherly love as Christians, as well as love to all men. (Gal. 5 : 22-24.) Along with this development of this moral principle and character the Christian will also enrich his life by deeds of kindness and mercy and by doing all the good for which he may find opportunity.

9. **Its dangers.** The Christian life is not always easy. It is a constant warfare against Satan and his wiles. Sin and temptation beset the path of the Christian, arising from the lusts of the flesh and the allurements of the world. Pride, self-righteousness and selfishness are frequent perils. (Gal. 5 : 17-21.)

In his warfare, however, the Christian need not fear if he but keep near to Christ by faith, not forgetting to watch and pray. Let him "put on the whole armor of God," and then he will be given grace sufficient for every need and temptation. (Eph. 6 : 13-18.)

10. **Conclusion.** "The law of the Christian life is found in the commandments of Christ," which "include the whole law of God."—*Prof. W. B. Greene, D. D.* The Lord expects faithful and cheerful obedience, "doing the will of God from the heart."

The principles of the Christian life are righteousness, faith and love. (Matt. 5 : 20 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 7 ; Matt. 22 : 37-39 ; 1 Cor. 13 : 1-13.)

The end of the Christian life is salvation, with maturity of character crowned by final perfection. The believer confidently anticipates spiritual victory, eternal life and heavenly blessedness. (2 Tim. 4 : 6-8.)

QUESTIONS

1. Why should a view of the Christian life be given to the children?
2. Is there special need of instilling the ethical principles of the gospel in our children?
3. What is it to be a Christian?
4. Wherein does the Christian life differ from a worldly life?
5. Where and how does the Christian life begin?
6. What does it imply?
7. How does the Christian life grow?

8. What is sanctification?
9. What are the fruits of the Christian life?
10. What relation do good works have to faith?
11. What dangers are in the way?
12. What are the principles, the law and the end of the Christian life?

LESSON II

Duties of Church Members

A man cannot be a Christian without obligations resting upon him. A profession of faith lays corresponding responsibility upon the church member. **Church membership involves duty** to the Church. It is very important that the claims of duty should be impressed upon young Christians, and especially upon the newly-confirmed children; otherwise they may fail of that spiritual culture offered in the Church and which is so needful, and then, in later years, may find it difficult to take up the duties, into the habit of which they failed to be trained in childhood. What are some of the Christian's duties to the Church?

1. **Church attendance.** It is the plain duty of every professed follower of Christ to attend faithfully and regularly the services of the sanctuary. Note the example of the apostles. (Acts 2 : 42 and 46.) The pastor's mission is to work and preach the gospel for the salvation of the unsaved and the building up of his people in faith and Christian life, but he cannot fulfill this mission alone without their presence and co-operation. Do not expect it. If the pastor must be in the pulpit, they must be in the pew. If he must preach the gospel, they must be there to hear it. As they have the right to expect him to do his part, he has an equal right to expect them to do theirs.

The gospel cannot be preached effectively with empty pews. The church members must be there to get others into the Church. Not the pastor only, but the members also, make the drawing power of the Church. If they are loyal, they will be in their place and will not allow any light reason to keep them from the house of God.

Moreover, every member needs the constant ministry of the Church for **his own spiritual growth** and edification. He does not come to church to please the minister, as some mistakenly think, but because he needs to worship God and to continue in right relation to Him. The worship of God is an imperative duty, the fulfillment of which is essential to religious nurture.

Especially should we secure the **attendance of the children** at church, whether confirmed or unconfirmed. The absence of children and young people from the services of divine worship is a serious condition in present-day church life. As one writer says, it is leading to

"church suicide." Parents should use their parental authority, if necessary, to bring their sons and daughters to the house of God, just as they would to send them to the public school; otherwise they do their children an irreparable wrong. Someone has said, "Better a boy's complaint about the rigidity of a parent's insistence upon church attendance, than a man's censure of home laxity during the habit-making years of life."

Sunday school teachers should use their influence and precept in earnest co-operation with parents, to promote the attendance of their pupils at church, for church attendance is even more essential to the young than to the mature Christian who is established in character. The teacher who does not stay for worship after Sunday school does a grievous wrong to his scholars by his bad example. Important as the Sunday school is, it is secondary to the hour of public worship in the church, whose claim must be first and supreme. It is vitally important to the nurture of the young to form the habit of church attendance early. (Heb. 10:25.)

2. **Attention to the Holy Communion,** and the **Preparatory Service.** The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is "the culmination of Christian worship. In the sacrament the whole gospel is presented, and the soul feeds on Christ."—*Rev. E. K. Bell, D. D.* It is the duty of every Christian to be present at every opportunity for the reception of the Communion. (Luke 22:19.) No ordinary circumstance should ever be permitted to keep him away from this privilege and duty, the observance of which will satisfy the soul's deepest need. It is also an imperative duty to attend faithfully the preparatory service of confession and absolution. (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9.)

3. **Loyalty to the pastor.** The pastor of the congregation comes as the ambassador of Christ, and, with rarest exceptions, is worthy of the fullest confidence and most loyal support. It is the duty of church members to give their pastor this loyal support. Pray for him. Encourage and cheer him. Stand by him when he needs you. Be his helpers, and when he calls upon you to render some service, do it promptly and cheerfully. He will appreciate it and will be cheered. (1 Tim. 5:17.)

4. **The financial support of the church.** It is the duty of every church member, with scarcely an exception, to contribute something to the support of the church and her work. The Jews in Old Testament times were required to bring their offerings regularly for the tabernacle and temple worship. (Deut. 16:17.) The Christian, too, must bring his offerings to the Lord. It costs something in

money, often much, in order to keep up the church and make the work of the gospel effective.

No one else will support the church if the members do not. Therefore they should contribute willingly as they are able. (1 Cor. 16 : 2.) It is a debt they owe to God as much as any they owe to man, for the Christian Church has done more for their welfare and salvation than any other institution in the world. We shall speak of giving more at length in another lesson.

5. **Christian cheer and fellowship.** "In the corridor of a famous hospital, in full view of visitors, appears in large letters, 'Never say a discouraging word while in this building.' Much more fittingly might be inscribed in the vestibule of every church, 'Never say a discouraging word, never put a discouraging thought into any Christian heart.' It is a Christian's part to put good cheer into other hearts." * It is the duty of every believer to encourage and help his fellow-members at every opportunity. (Rom. 15 : 1 ; Gal. 6 : 2.)

Christian fellowship is a duty, for church members, being members of Christ, have so much in common. Church members generally, and especially young confirmed members, "should find their associates and companions in the Church," that they may help one another to grow in grace. Worldly and evil associates interfere with religious culture. (John 15 : 12 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 22 and 3 : 8 ; 1 John 4 : 11 ; 2 Cor. 6 : 17.)

6. **Bring others.** A true Christian will not be content with his own blessing, but will want others to enjoy the benefits of the gospel and the Church. He should have the missionary spirit. The great commission (Matt. 28 : 19), applies to him in the field of his home and neighborhood, as well as to the missionary in foreign lands. He should make it his purpose to be a soul-winner, and to bring others who are unsaved to Christ and into His Church. (Matt. 22 : 9, 10 ; John 1 : 40-42 ; Deut. 31 ; 12, 13.) In such service there is great joy.

7. It is the duty of every church member to make himself **an intelligent Christian,** for in this enlightened age there is no excuse for being otherwise. He should know what he believes and understand the faith which he professes. (1 Pet. 3 : 15.) He should know something, as much as possible, about his own Church, and should acquaint himself with her history, polity, worship and doctrines. He should keep informed as to the religious movements of the day and the missionary progress which is being made.

To this end, he will listen to his pastor's sermons, go to Sunday

* Bell : "At the Altar and After," p. 20.

school, and read religious books. It is especially important that he take and read a church paper of his own denomination. Every Christian family should have at least one church paper upon their table. Otherwise they cannot be intelligent church members. Religious literature is a valuable element in the nurture of the children of the church, and they should be trained to read it.

8. **Loyal service.** A true Christian owes faithful and loyal service to his church. "Remember, you can belong to only one church, and to that you owe your first duty. Your own church is to have the first place in your sympathies, your prayers and your service. To be elsewhere when you can be in your own place, to divide your heart between some other church and your own, is perilous. God put you in your own church—it is there you are to witness for Him; it is there you are to put your whole heart and strength. Be loyal to your own. To your own church you are bound by the most sacred ties and high responsibilities. Be faithful here and you will be faithful elsewhere." *

The loyal church member will **speak well** of his church and **guard her good name.** He will not criticise and find fault with the Church before the world, for the Church is the "household of God." He will honor the Church by a godly Christian life, after the example of Jesus, and thus let his light shine. (Matt. 5 : 16.)

9. **Conclusion.** No opportunity should be lost to impress these duties upon the baptized and confirmed children of the Church, for the performance of them is essential to the nurture and development of the Christian life.

* Bell: "At the Altar and After," pp. 33, 34.

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QUESTIONS

1. Name some important duties of church members to the church.
2. Why is church attendance the duty of the Christian?
3. In what way does attendance upon public worship benefit the worshiper?
4. Is the attendance of children at worship important? Why?
5. Should the attendance of children be insisted upon?
6. Is attention to the Lord's Supper a duty?
7. How should church members regard their pastor?
8. Why is it our duty to support the church financially?
9. What should be our relations to our fellow-members?
10. What is the Christian's duty to the unsaved?
11. Is religious literature necessary to religious culture?
12. Why should church members be loyal to their own church?
13. Is there special need of impressing these duties upon the children?

LESSON III

Christian Prayer

One of the most **practical factors** in the Christian life is **prayer.** A true Christian prays. A prayerless Christian is impossible. Therefore our children should be taught to pray early in life. As they grow older and develop into the Christian life they should be trained in the practice of prayer and should be led to appreciate its value, its blessing and its meaning.

1. **What is prayer?** Prayer is sometimes defined as "making known our requests to God." This is good as far as it goes, but it is not comprehensive enough, for prayer is a broad term. It is the soul's act of approaching God in praise, adoration and petition, thereby binding himself in living, spiritual communion with the heavenly Father, by the increasing bonds of love and faith. As such, prayer is a great factor in human life. It is one source of the Christian's power (James 5 : 16), and is an "actual and recognizable force in the universe."—*President Faunce.* "None," says Luther, "can believe how powerful prayer is, and what it is able to effect, but those who have learned it by experience."

Professor George Adam Smith says: * "**Prayer** is not the asking of our own way, but His. Prayer is penitence, confession, aspiration, resignation; the converse of our hearts with the Father; the discipline of our wills to His will; the sincere and strenuous approach of our minds to the mysteries of His." It is that mighty agency which keeps the Christian and the Church within reach of the channels of divine grace and the empowering Spirit, and the absence of which chills and clogs up all the soul's avenues. The prayerless soul and the prayerless Church are powerless to maintain spiritual life and to fulfill their mission. Men ought always to pray. (Luke 18 : 1.)

The act of prayer includes a **coming to God** (Matt. 11 : 28), and **talking with Him** (Gen. 18 : 27).

2. **The persons involved.** There are two persons necessarily involved in the idea and act of prayer. If there were but one person there could be no prayer. Prayer implies a second person to whom it can be addressed, who can hear it, and who may answer it.

* "The Forgiveness of Sins," p. 75.

In Christian prayer the **two persons** involved are **God and man.** Man prays, God hears and answers. A belief in the existence of God as a personal, intelligent Being, is fundamental to the conception of prayer. (Heb. 11 : 6.) We cannot pray to an impersonal thing or to an unintelligent force or principle. Prayer begins with God, for He prompts and inspires it. (Rom. 8 : 26, 27.) He has ever encouraged men to pray, while Jesus taught His disciples the same. Then man offers his praises and petitions to God, and He in turn answers, thus inciting men to further prayer. This has been called "the circular motion of prayer."

3. **Prayer, universal and natural.** Men have always prayed, from the time of "righteous Abel" to the present day. All the heroes of the Old Testament were mighty in prayer. Jesus prayed, and His disciples were great also in prayer. Christian believers everywhere are praying men. (Ex. 32 : 11 ; Ps. 55 : 17 ; Dan. 6 : 10 ; Acts 16 : 25.) Not only so, but the ancient pagan peoples and modern African savages have recognized the existence of some sovereign Being, whom they ought to worship.

It is just as natural for men to pour out the wants and fears of their hearts to God as it is for our children to come to us with their wants, plans and perplexities. God has planted the conviction of His own Being and readiness to hear, in men's hearts. (Ps. 19 : 1.) The noblest men, like Paul, Luther, Walter Scott, Faraday, Gladstone, Lincoln, Havelock, have believed in prayer and used it.

4. **The elements of prayer.** True Christian prayer is an act of devotion and includes—

(1) **Adoration,** which is the rendering of due tribute of worship unto God. (Ps. 104 : 1, 2.)

(2) **Thanksgiving,** the grateful recognition of divine blessings and mercies. (Ps. 105 : 1, 2 ; Phil. 4 : 6.)

(3) **Confession of sin.** (Ps. 51 ; 1 John 1 : 9.)

(4) **Petition.** This includes supplication for forgiveness and spiritual blessing and for all blessings of a temporal nature. (Ps. 51 : 1, 2 ; 1 John 5 : 14.)

5. **The motive.** The inner motive of prayer is a deep sense of need. On the one hand, it is the need of forgiveness and salvation awakened by the consciousness of sin. Because we are sinners we cry out for forgiveness and cleansing. (Luke 18 : 13.)

It is also the sense of the need of divine help, support and guidance in the midst of our daily life and in our temptations, trials and dangers. (Ps. 46 : 1.)

6. **The habit of prayer.** The practice of prayer ought to become the fixed **habit** of the Christian. Of the first Christians, it is said (Acts 2:42), "And they continued steadfastly . . . in prayers." They developed the habit. Habits are powerful and influential in shaping character. Therefore, a good habit may be a very great blessing. The practice of daily prayer certainly will be.

This habit should be formed **early in life.** The religious nurture of the children of the Church cannot well be promoted except they be taught to pray at their mother's knee. It is needful that they should then be led step by step into a larger experience of prayer and into some understanding of that fellowship with God into which it brings them. The Sunday school and Church should encourage the young to maintain the practice of daily prayer. Jesus has taught the value of secret and private prayer, when one may turn aside from the world and alone commune with God. (Matt. 6:6.)

7. **Prayer in the Name of Jesus.** The chief distinctive feature of Christian prayer is that it is prayer in the name of Jesus. (John 16:23, 24.) By this is meant that it is not merely prayer about Jesus or for the things He may give, but it is prayer offered in reliance upon Him and His word, and with full faith in His promises and the warrant He has given us for approach to God.* Perhaps no other element in prayer appeals so strongly to the child-heart and understanding and makes so effectively for Christian nurture as this fact that his petition is offered in the name of Jesus. His affection and trust are evoked, for he easily learns to know and understand the Saviour's love.

8. **Effects and benefits.** These are many:

(*a*) Prayer brings **answers,** for it has power with God. (Matt. 7:11; John 14:13, 14; James 5:16; 2 Kings 19:14-19, 35.) Luther testifies: "It is a great matter when in extreme need to take hold on prayer. I know, whenever I have earnestly prayed, I have been amply heard, and have obtained more than I prayed for. God, indeed, sometimes delayed, but at last He came."

(*b*) It **molds** men in character and faith.

(*c*) It is a **citadel** against the assaults of temptation and gives courage and power.

(*d*) It is a strong **support** of piety.

(*e*) It leads to **salvation** and heaven.

"Could one imagine any exercise more adapted to ennoble man than this of true prayer? It would promote that genuine humility which

*Martensen: "Dogmatics," p. 415.

consists well with the highest exaltation. It lifts mind and heart towards Him who is the sum of all excellence. We imitate whom we worship. We grow like Him whom we adore. We are ourselves exalted in exalting Him. It stands to reason that no man can be a worse man, but on the contrary a better man, for entering daily his closet and praying to his Father and his God."—*President Faunce.*

9. **Conditions of effectual prayer.** Some of these are: (1) A sense of want (Luke 18:13); (2) the spirit of humility and reverence (Exod. 3:5); (3) filial gratitude (Phil. 4:6); (4) faith (Heb. 11:6; Mark 11:24); (5) obedience (Prov. 28:9); (6) forgiveness of injuries (Mark 11:25); (7) submission to the will of God (Luke 22:42; 1 John 5:14); (8) perseverance and importunity (Rom. 12:12; Luke 18:1-7); (9) union with other petitioners (Matt. 18:19); (10) pray in the name of Jesus (John 14:13; 16:23, 24).

10. **The model prayer.** Our Lord has given us the model prayer, which is to be offered by the Church in all ages. (Matt. 6:9-13.) It is "the prayer that teaches to pray." It is a model in form, substance and spirit; a model of simplicity, directness and the expression of the heart's desires. Reverent and devout, it rises above selfish considerations and is wide-reaching in its scope and comprehensiveness. "It is a model prayer because it embodies the deepest need of the Church and of the individual likewise. Neither in the history of the Church, nor in the life of the individual can any want arise which may not find here its true expression and its satisfaction."—*Martensen.*

The Lord's Prayer should be used often in private and public worship, and should be taught to our children. As they catch its spirit and motive and study its petitions they will learn how to form their own prayers. Professor Gibson characterizes it as "this pearl of great price, this purest crystal of devotion, to be a possession of His people forever, never to lose its luster through millenniums of daily use, its beauty and preciousness becoming rather more and more manifest to each successive generation."—*Expositors' Bible.*

11. **A factor in child-nurture.** The Lutheran Church, remembering the example of Jesus and the rich experience of Luther, Gerhardt, Harms, Fliedner and a host of others, has not failed to appreciate the value of prayer in the Christian nurture of young and old. The teacher as well as the parent, recognizing it as a most practical factor in the Christian life, will use every opportunity to impress the foregoing truths upon the minds of children and youth.

QUESTIONS

1. Is prayer a factor in the Christian life?
2. What is prayer as to its nature and form?
3. What persons are involved in prayer, and in what relation?
4. Is prayer a universal practice? Why?
5. What are the elements in Christian prayer?
6. What is the motive of Christian prayer?
7. Should the habit of prayer be formed early in children?
8. What is the chief distinctive feature of Christian prayer?
9. Name some effects and benefits of prayer.
10. Name at least five conditions of effectual prayer.
11. In what respects is the Lord's Prayer the model prayer?
12. How much of a factor is prayer in child-nurture?

LESSON IV

The Principles of Christian Worship

The **functions of the Christian Church** are two in number—namely, those of **worship** and **teaching.** These two are of equal importance, or nearly so, for they arise from the two greatest spiritual wants of man, the hunger for God and the thirst for truth and knowledge. That each should be given its true and appropriate place, we conclude from the practice of the ancient Jewish Church, from the example of our Lord Himself, and from the practice and teaching of His disciples.

Aside from other considerations, Christian worship should be emphasized because it is one of the very practical things in the Christian life, and, therefore, one of the necessary elements of religious nurture. The spiritual training of our children requires that they should be trained properly in the worship of God, not neglecting their duty.

1. **What is worship?** True worship is the expression of the soul's devotion to God—of love, loyalty and gratitude. It is essentially "a personal communion with God," in which the soul makes earnest self-surrender to Him. The act of worship involves reciprocal action in which two elements may be distinguished—"what God brings to us and what we bring to God." * "In worship we offer praise, thanksgiving, petition. We contemplate the excellence of the divine character, the gracious work of redemption, the blessing of providential care and the beauty of revealed truth." "On the other hand, God bestows upon us the truth of His word, the grace of forgiveness, the enlightening presence of the Holy Spirit, and the blessing of advancing sanctification."

2. **Duty of worship: its ground.** Intuitively man knows his duty to God, and is moved to bow in adoration. This has been true in all times and in all races. "You will, perchance, light upon cities without gates, without a theatre, and without a palace; but you will find no city without a temple," says Plutarch. This was true in his time and is true in ours. The worship so universally offered is the recognition of the supreme majesty of God and the deepest wants of the truly religious nature.

* Richards and Painter: "Christian Worship," p. 11.

There is a **twofold ground** of Christian worship.

(1) The **first reason** for worship is **in God** Himself. The divine nature is that of a spiritual Being. This in itself is sufficient to awaken the impulse to adoration. God is Creator and Lord of all things His greatness and majesty (Ps. 95 : 3-7), His goodness, purity and holiness (Ps. 145 : 9 ; 1 Sam. 2 : 2), His grace and love (1 Pet. 2 : 3 ; John 3 : 16), all inspire worship. (Isa. 6 : 3.) Worship is due to God because of what He is, and He requires and seeks it. (John 4 : 23.)

(2) The **second reason** for worship is **in man.** We need to worship in order to live a Christian life ; therefore God commands it. (Matt. 4 : 10.) It is good for us, for it lifts up, instructs, soothes, strengthens, satisfies the highest and noblest aspirations and brings us into closer fellowship with God. Worship also lies at the very root of morality, individual and social, directing the minds and hearts of men toward the divine Author of all that is right and good.

3. **The nature of true worship.** True worship is spiritual. "Man has a spiritual nature ; that is, the power to conceive of a Deity and a supernatural world, and the capacity to adore, love and trust. In the course of his mental development these powers start spontaneously into action," * with the result that the soul is led to worship. Jesus declared (John 4 : 24), "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." (See also 1 Chron. 16 : 29.) God "operates invisibly on the soul. And all the elements of acceptable worship on the part of man—love, trust, reverence, gratitude—are affections of the soul." †

True worship, therefore, is essentially spiritual: it is an act of the heart, offered sincerely and in the beauty of holiness." External forms and places are necessary, but they do not in themselves constitute acceptable worship. The tendency to substitute outward ceremonies for the inward spiritual offerings of the soul should not be allowed. True worship is not merely the external observance of a religious rite or ceremony, but it is a moral act by which the worshiper unites himself with God. Wherever there is the actual outgoing of faith and love, reaching out toward the heavenly Father, there is worship. It is the expression of the soul's attitude to his Saviour ; the inner disposition of love, faith, devotion, gratitude and consecration. Such is the worship that the Lord desires and seeks.

4. **The expression of worship.** Let us not conclude, from what has been said, that outward forms and places of worship are unneces-

* Richards and Painter : "Christian Worship," p. 9.
† Same, p. 13.

sary. Such a conclusion would be very hasty, for inward worship must express itself in outward form. Because God spoke first to mankind, man wishes to speak to God; and precisely because God is a purely spiritual Being, He wills that He be worshiped in spirit and in truth, that is, in such a way that the worship shall be in harmony with His pure spiritual nature. Hence inner religiousness and worship seek expression in forms which are worthy. These two, inner and external worship, are related to each other as feeling and action are related; as the tree and the fruit; as the fountain and the stream; for worship is not only a frame of mind, but also a direct action.

Love and gratitude always demand outward expression. The absence of the latter implies the absence of the former. This is true in religion and in our relations to God. **True worship must find outward and worthy expression of itself.** (Ps. 116:1, 2.) Jesus made use of forms of worship, praying in the temple, singing hymns with His disciples, and giving for their use a form of prayer. (Matt. 26:30; 6:9.)

There are three forms of external worship:

(*a*) The first is **individual worship** in private by prayer, meditation and reading of the Bible. This is a test of sincerity, for a man is not likely to worship privately unless he is sincere and in earnest. Our children should be trained to private devotion. No Christian can afford to neglect it, for it is necessary to spiritual nurture.

(*b*) The second is **family worship,** which is essential to the religious growth of young and old. Of this we shall speak later.

(*c*) The third form in which worship expresses itself is that of the **house of God**—the common worship of believers, which Jesus has promised to bless by His presence. (Matt. 18:20.) Because Christianity is the religion of reconciliation, regeneration and brotherly love, it requires that the congregation come with holy joy into the presence of God.

5. **Liturgical actions,** or forms of expression of public worship. The fundamental actions or elements of Christian worship are the presentation of the word of God by reading and preaching, prayer in the name of Jesus, and the sacraments.—*Martensen.* With these we mention others also. (Acts 2:42.)

(1) **The reading of the Scriptures.** This is an essential part of every meeting for public worship, for thereby God speaks to the congregation. It should in no case be omitted.

(2) **Preaching.** This is the central and highest act of worship,

whereby the gospel is expounded and brought to the congregation as the message of God by the pastor, the minister of Christ.

(3) **Prayer.** In prayer, the congregation speaks to God, responding to His message of grace; uniting with the pastor either audibly or following him silently and in spirit.

(4) **The sacraments.** These combine the visible and spiritual elements of worship and are the culminating expression of it.

(5) **Sacred song.** This is the noblest expression of the awakened religious feeling, and is the homage rendered in common by the worshipers to God, being well pleasing to Him and of great blessing to the people themselves.

(6) **The offering.** The gathering of the contributions of the people and the laying of them upon the altar of the Lord are as much a solemn act of worship as the preceding. The offering should be so considered, and not treated lightly. (Matt. 5:23, 24.)

These forms of worship are to awaken a worshipful frame of mind, to direct our thoughts to God, and to serve as vehicles to express the feelings of the heart.

6. **Conduct in worship.** We express our worship by our personal manner, which must be in harmony with the place and purpose, reverent, quiet and serious. (Ps. 95:6; Ex. 4:31; Matt. 2:11.) "Where there is no awe there will be little worship."—*Dr. John Watson.*

Some practical suggestions:—

(1) Enter and depart quietly at public worship.

(2) Bow the head in silent prayer on being seated and after the benediction.

(3) Take part in the service and be attentive. Make it yours.

(4) Conversation and laughter are out of place. Come to worship.

Begin early to impress the meaning of Christian worship and these simple principles of conduct upon the child. They are a part of his religious training.

QUESTIONS

1. What are the functions of the Church?
2. Why should Christian worship be emphasized?
3. What is worship, and what does it involve?
4. Has the duty of worship been universally recognized?
5. Why should men worship God?
6. What is the nature of true Christian worship?
7. If true worship is spiritual, are external forms needful?
8. Why must worship find expression?
9. In what ways may worship find expression?
10. Name the principal liturgical actions or forms of expression of public worship.
11. What place do the Scriptures hold in Christian worship?
12. What should be our conduct in public worship?
13. What bearing have these principles of Christian worship on the nurture of the children of the Church?

LESSON V

Lutheran Worship

Christian worship, the principles of which we have studied in Lesson IV., is a very practical agency in promoting the development of Christian culture. It is educative, inspiring, helpful and quickening to the spiritual life. It is important that correct views of worship should be held. Many denominations have differed widely as to its place and scope in church life. It is a matter of further practical value, therefore, that our Lutheran young people should be taught from their childhood to understand our Lutheran view of worship, to know something of her historic practice and to appreciate her liturgical riches. They ought to be trained in fixed habits of reverent and intelligent worship, into which our Lutheran practice is well calculated to lead them. This will tell for the promotion of religious culture.

1. **The Lutheran view of worship.** The Lutheran Church has been and is a liturgical Church ; that is, she emphasizes her function of worship and makes use of external forms for the enrichment and effectiveness of her orders of service and for the proper expression of inner religiousness. Some churches have placed the largest emphasis on the function of teaching and have subordinated worship, in a few instances giving it but light consideration. At the other extreme, the Roman Catholic Church over-emphasized worship, making it ornate and extravagant, and subordinating the teaching function until, for centuries preaching was almost entirely eliminated, and even yet to-day has not attained its rightful place in the service of God's house. The Lutheran Church takes a correct and scriptural position, regarding the two functions of teaching and worship as coordinate. She honors and exalts the preaching of the word, and at the same time gives the second function of the church its proper place as presenting the visible word in the sacraments and leading the believer into fellowship with God by adoration, praise and prayer.

2. **The place of preaching in worship.** The Lutheran Church understands from Mark 16 : 15 and John 8 : 31 that preaching has been appointed as a permanent and integral part of Christian worship, and that it is "the chief part which rules the whole service." Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified." The subject-matter of preaching is

primarily the word of God, and, more specifically, **Jesus Christ.** To preach Christ is to preach the grace of God, the atonement, the forgiveness of sins and salvation. (2 Cor. 5:19-21.) The view and practice of the Lutheran Church from the time of Luther have been to present, as the center of Christian preaching, **justification by faith in Christ;** "in other words, the appropriation of reconciliation—*i. e.*, of the forgiveness of sins and divine adoption by the believing reception of the grace of God."—*Luthardt.*

The preaching of this message the Lutheran Church has ever considered as the **objective factor** and the **chief matter** in divine worship. Preaching, "as conveying truth from God to man, clearly belongs to the objective side of worship. It is properly regarded as the principal part of worship. This was its place in the apostolic Church and in the reformatory movements of the sixteenth century. Luther points out the absence of preaching as one of the three great abuses in the Roman Church, and declares 'that the Christian congregation should never assemble except the word of God be preached'; and in the Preface to the General Mass he says that 'in all worship the greatest and principal part is to preach and teach God's word.'" * Preaching holds the central, highest and most important place in worship.

3. **The place of the sacraments in worship.** While one of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church lay in exalting the mass as the central and chief thing in worship, the Lutheran Church has not been indifferent to the really high place of the **sacraments** in true worship. She teaches their deep significance and honors them. The word, indeed, is first, but the sacraments are the visible word, the word being the essential element in a sacrament. Therefore they belong to Christian worship, especially the **Lord's Supper;** for while baptism is conferred but once upon the individual, the Lord's Supper is celebrated frequently and regularly by all the congregation.

"**The communion** of the Lord's Supper is a rite of great solemnity. It embodies in its significance the entire atoning work of our Lord. In it He comes peculiarly near His people."—*Richards.* In its action "there is a living union of the internal and the external, the invisible and the visible, the spiritual and the corporeal."—*Martensen.* Thus, in visible form, evidencing and witnessing the redeeming work of Christ, it becomes, while not the chief thing, yet the very climax of Christian worship, awakening the believer's humble penitence, rejoicing faith and grateful praise.

4. **Faith, the subjective principle.** The Lutheran Church lays

* Richards and Painter: "Christian Worship," p. 22.

much stress upon faith as the subjective principle of worship, this being the correlative of the objective principle of the word and the sacraments. It involves "the faith, devotion and self-surrender of the congregation, which express themselves by prayer, praise and thanksgiving in response to the gospel."—*Richards and Painter.* This element of faith has manifested itself in the especially rich and devotional hymnody of our Church.

5. **Expression of worship in architecture.** Worship has a tendency to express itself in the structure in which God is worshiped. The Gothic style of church architecture seems to have been especially adapted to express the seriousness, earnestness and dignity of the Teutonic races in religious worship, and has become the prevailing style of architecture in the Lutheran Church when any attention is paid to that question.

The usual arrangement of the interior of the church among Lutherans generally is that of the chancel with lecturn or reading desk, pulpit and altar, with baptismal font before the chancel. The place of the altar at the rear center of the chancel is significant of the Lord's Supper as the crowning act of worship and of fellowship with God as its goal. The place of the lecturn and pulpit at the front of the chancel, one on either side, and between the altar and the congregation, point to the word of God and preaching as the central and most important elements of worship. The organ and choir at the side are significant of the subordination of the æsthetic element to the spiritual truth of the gospel.

6. **The Lutheran Church is a liturgical Church**; that is, she has been accustomed to make use of necessary and edifying forms in which to give adequate expression to the spirit of worship. Luther's principle in the Reformation was to cast aside all in the Roman worship which was unscriptural, expressive of false teaching and burdensome to the conscience, and to retain everything that was scriptural or not in conflict with Scripture, and what might be useful unto edification. Hence, the Lutheran Church has retained many of the noblest forms of earlier Christian worship, musical and scriptural, and embodies them in her numerous liturgies, the use of which has always been a matter of freedom. The use of a form of liturgical service promotes order, unity, reverence and dignity in worship, and gives every individual the opportunity of having a part in the service.

7. **The Common Service.** The most noteworthy liturgical development in our American churches of recent years has been the preparation and adoption of "The Common Service" by the joint action

of the General Synod, the General Council and the United Synod, South, the first step having been taken in 1878. The Common Service is scriptural and is the fruit of historical Lutheran usage. It consists of the following parts: (1) "In the name of the Father," etc., the recognition of the presence of the triune God; (2) The Confession of sins, including the exhortation, versicles ("Our help," etc., and "I said, I will confess," etc.), confession, confessional prayer and declaration of grace; (3) Introit, a special one for each Sunday and announcing the chief thought of the day's lessons; (4) Gloria Patri, glory to the triune God; (5) the Kyrie, or prayer for mercy; (6) the Gloria in Excelsis, a hymn of praise, (7) Salutation; (8) the Collect for the day; (9) the Epistle, followed by Hallelujah; (10) the announcement of the Gospel, with response; (11) the Gospel, with response; (12) the Creed; (13) Hymn; (14) Sermon; (15) "The peace of God," etc.; (16) Offertory; (17) General Prayer, with Lord's Prayer; (18) Hymn; (19) Benediction.

Should the Lord's Supper be administered, an order of service is provided. The order for evening worship is shorter but beautifully appropriate. Complete provision for the requirements of the Church Year is made. The Common Service is coming into very general use throughout the bodies named.

QUESTIONS

1. Is it important to have correct views of worship?
2. Should Lutheran young people be given an understanding of our Church's view of worship?
3. What is the Lutheran view of the place of worship in the church life?
4. What is the subject-matter of preaching?
5. What place should preaching have in worship?
6. What place does the Lord's Supper hold in worship?
7. What is the subjective principle of worship?
8. Does worship express itself in architecture?
9. What is the proper arrangement of the interior of a Lutheran church?
10. Is the Lutheran Church a liturgical church?
11. What was Luther's principle as to the forms of worship?
12. What is the Common Service?

LESSON VI

Home-Nurture and Family Worship

1. **The Christian home.** Looking at human society as composed of a multitude of men and women, the individual is the unit. But looking at it as a vast moral organism, designed to be full of blessing and efficiency, the unit of society is the family. The latter is the "distinctive glory of the human race." The members of the family are bound together by the closest and most sacred of all human relationships. It becomes a Christian family as this bond of union in the little community becomes a spiritual bond, resting upon a foundation both ethical and religious.

"In the family," says Dr. MacLaren, "Christianity has most signally displayed its power of refining, ennobling and sanctifying earthly relationships. Indeed, one may say that domestic life, as seen in thousands of Christian homes, is purely a Christian creation." Out of the Christian family emerges the **Christian home,** the highest ideal of the family life, necessary to the religious nurture of our children and a vital factor in the kingdom of God. The basis of the Christian home is Christian marriage, in which both husband and wife are Christians, bound by the consciousness of unity in Christ. The same bond unites parents and children. It is a home where Christ reigns, dwells, refines and sanctifies. It is one where God is reverently worshiped, where Christ's gospel and its truths prevail, and in which love, justice, virtue and obedience rule. To the family relation the Christian religion gives a tenderness and a moral beauty nowhere else seen.

2. **Elements of home-nurture.**

(1) **A religious atmosphere.** As pure air is essential to a healthful development of the physical life, so the religious atmosphere of the home is an essential factor in the moral and spiritual growth of the child. "What the Church needs to-day is not better preaching, but more home religion. If the nation is to be saved for God, if souls are to be quickened and won to Him, if men are to be a strong arm of the Church, then there must be a spiritual awakening in the home and a rebuilding of many of the broken down altars. The minister may preach like a Paul, and live like a saint, but unless he has the co-

operation of the home, he will be unable to keep the boys and men in the Church."*

There must be **Christian parents** in order to a Christian home atmosphere. This is a truism, and scarcely needs argument, but it needs emphasis. Certainly, if husband and wife, father and mother are not true Christians, there can be no ideal home life, for the foundation is not there. If there is to be a **Christian atmosphere** the parents must create it by their own godly living and example set before their household.

Parental opportunity and responsibility are first and greatest. Parents should undertake with daily watchfulness and prayer to train their children in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord," and to develop in them holiness and goodness and the Christian virtues and graces. They will accomplish this primarily by their personal influence and example. In the words of Prof. Luthardt, "Religion must first approach the child in the form of life, and afterward in the form of instruction. Let religion be the atmosphere by which the child is surrounded, the air which it breathes." The religious atmosphere of a Christian home will make religion natural and attractive to him.

(2) **Parental authority.** The **maintenance** of **parental authority** and **filial obedience** is another factor in child-nurture. There is great laxity in parental government, possibly a reaction from former severity, but the pendulum has swung too far. In the home there should be firm but gentle family government, with reasonable discipline and insistence upon obedience. (Prov. 3 : 12 ; 23 : 13 ; 29 : 15.) Paul's injunction to children is "laconic, decisive, universal." (Col. 3 : 20.) "Obey your parents in all things." Children should be taught **unquestioning obedience** to parental authority, the ground of which is laid in obedience and love to God. (Ex. 20 : 12.)

The relation of family government to the Christian training of the child is well stated by Dr. Arthur T. Pierson : "There is a period in human life when the only God the child knows is the father and mother. Not being able to grasp the idea of Deity the parent stands between the child and the conception of God ; and if then the child learns to honor and obey the father and mother, when the conception of Deity dawns on the understanding, it is comparatively easy to transfer filial obedience and love from the human parent to the divine, from the father on earth to the Father in heaven. One reason why there is so little piety even in so-called Christian families is because

* L. M. Zimmerman, D. D.: "The Child and the Church," p. 28.

parental discipline and childlike obedience are so rare." If the child does not learn to obey in the home he will not learn to obey the laws of God or of human society.

(3) **Religious instruction.** Another important factor in home-nurture is the **systemtic training** of the children in religious truth by the parents. This is Paul's direct and positive injunction in Eph. 6:4. Parents do wrong to shift responsibility for religious instruction upon the pastor or Sunday school teacher. They do not perform their full duty to their children unless they, in some measure, give such instruction to them, directly teaching the doctrines and duties of religion just as they would other things. "Parents who would have their children love the Saviour must lead them themselves to the foot of the cross."—*Interior.*

Christian precept and knowledge coming from the loved father and mother steadily through years will have the most lasting effect for spiritual good and the laying of the foundation of saving faith and Christian character. It was a command of the Mosaic economy that parents should teach their children the law. (Deut. 6:6, 7.) So should we teach our children the law of the Lord and the Gospel of Christ. Begin early by showing the little ones Bible pictures; then tell them Bible stories, which never fail to enlist their eager interest. A little later parents may explain to them the simpler truths of the gospel and then the great doctrines of our faith. Teach the children to read and study their Bibles, and make use of Luther's Catechism, which is an excellent summary of the teachings of the word. Luther prepared his catechism for use in the family, and every Lutheran parent should make it his assistant in home-nurture. Religious instruction is essential to Christian training (Prov. 22:6), and given in the home, makes the word effective in the sanctuary.

(4) **Teach the child to pray.** "Let it not be objected that the child cannot understand the prayer. The way of education is by practice to understanding, not by understanding to practice. And the child will have a feeling and a presentiment of what it cannot understand." He "will speak to his Father in heaven without needing much instruction as to who that Father is."—*Luthardt.*

(5) **Family worship.** This practice, now unhappily falling into wide disuse, is an invaluable factor in the child's spiritual culture. A Christian home is one where Jesus has a dwelling-place, and where He abides. There can be no such a home without the continued presence of God, but wherever an altar has been erected to Him in faith and devotion, there He is present. It was over the mercy-seat in the

Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and temple that God gave the visible sign of His presence. And in every home where is established a family altar, we may confidently expect the presence of the Lord. Jesus said, "Abide in me, and I in you." (John 15:4.) Worship in the home circle is a necessary means in order that the members of the family may abide in Christ, and thus realize the fulfillment of the promise of His own abiding presence with them.

We are not in much danger of over-estimating the power for good of the voice of prayer and song and the Bible in the home circle when maintained faithfully, not in a formal spirit, but in a simple, trustful, worshipful and devotional spirit. The practice of family worship brings **many blessings**:*

(*a*) It brings Christ and God into the home, with peace and love.

(*b*) It makes home a sacred place, promoting unity and bringing a breath of heaven.

(*c*) It softens the heart, purifies the affections, awakens holy aspirations, and gives hope for the day's duties.

(*d*) It fortifies every member of the home against temptation and strengthens piety and Christian conduct.

(*e*) It leads the children early into fellowship with Christ, nourishes their Christian faith and establishes religious convictions.

God's altar in the home, where the father-priest leads his children into closer communion with God, is the strongest link to bind them to Him, whom they are taught to love and serve. These influences will not be lost. Many a man to-day gratefully and reverently acknowledges his debt to the home worship of his childhood. Nowhere is religion quite so beautiful and effective as in the home.

(6) **The conduct of family worship.**†

(*a*) Select times when all the family can conveniently assemble.

(*b*) Let the service be short and interesting.

(*c*) Do not omit the reading of the word of God, even if it be only a verse or two.

(*d*) If it be possible, employ sacred song.

(*e*) Let all the members take part, at least occasionally, either in prayer or in reading of the Bible.

(*f*) Avoid praying the same prayer all the time. Ask God for what you want.

(*g*) Let thanksgiving be made to God for all His mercies on the home and every member of the family.

* Adapted from Bishop Hott: "Sacred Hours," p. 54.

† Same, p. 58.

(7) **Religious literature** is also a factor in home-nurture and a Christian atmosphere. Besides the Bible, good books should be placed in the hands of the children and they should be taught to appreciate and read them. Neither can a Christian family afford to do without their own Church paper, which will teach religious truth and inform them as to the work of their own denomination and the Church in general. The influence of Christian literature in the home should not be under-estimated.

QUESTIONS

1. What is the unit of society?
2. What is a Christian home?
3. Name some elements of Christian nurture in the home.
4. What is a Christian atmosphere?
5. Who make a Christian atmosphere?
6. What influence has parental authority on child-nurture?
7. What relation has obedience to the child's moral development?
8. Should children be taught to pray early?
9. In what way is family worship a factor in religious culture?
10. Name some blessings of family worship.
11. How should family worship be conducted?
12. What value has religious literature for the nurture of the child?

LESSON VII

Missions in the Sunday School

1. **The Sunday school and missions.** "The day is coming when the Sunday school that has not sent some of its members to the foreign field as missionaries, while at the same time numbering still others in its membership as volunteers pledged to go, will be ashamed and self-condemned. The reason why Sunday schools generally have not yet reached this high but practicable standard is because most Sunday school workers do not know what the Sunday school is, and what is the real end of its effort."—*Chas. G. Trumbull.*

The **object** of the Sunday school is usually represented as **Bible study,** and then **winning souls** for Christ. However, it is much broader in its scope. The Sunday school should aim ultimately to train young and old for Christian service **anywhere.** The Sunday school's final purpose is the **missionary enterprise,** "beginning at Jerusalem," of course, but reaching out also to "the uttermost part of the earth." (Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8.) "The implanting of the missionary spirit so as to give it control of the life of every pupil, may fairly be said to be the chief and sole purpose of the Sunday school."—*Trumbull.*

2. **The Sunday school's duty.** The one great and supreme mission of the Christian Church is the **evangelization** of the world. (Matt. 28:19.) Therefore, as the Sunday school is an integral part of the Church, it must meet the same obligation. It owes it to the cause of Christ, to use its influence, its exceptional teaching opportunity, its organized power, to promote missions.

The need is that superintendents and teachers should cooperate in the definite aim to provide some **missionary instruction,** and to create and maintain a **missionary atmosphere** in the school. Such a purpose, formulated as a definite missionary policy, will include the giving of (1) information to the pupils touching the needs of the vast unevangelized portions of the world; (2) something of missionary history and biography; (3) information as to one's denominational work; (4) information as to the scriptural grounds for the missionary enterprise (Mark 16:15), the divine purpose (John 3:16), the logical necessity (Rom. 10:13-15), and the moral obligation (John 15:12; Matt. 10:8).

3. **Missionary instruction and child-nurture.** "Missionary instruction is necessary for the highest intellectual and spiritual development of the child. Not alone does he need missionary education because of what he may do for missions, but because of what missions will do for him. It will enlarge his vision, broaden his sympathies, and develop his spiritual life as is possible in no other way.*

That the above claim is correct will appear readily to the thoughtful student of the principles of Christian nurture. When our children are trained step by step into an increasing and intelligent interest in missions and into a growing readiness to give to the cause, the **reflex influence** of their interest and giving will not fail to be of spiritual benefit. They will gain a knowledge of the growth of the Church and the kingdom, while the triumphs of the cross will prove an inspiration to them. Their faith in Christ and His gospel will become stronger. They will be drawn out of the narrow and self-centered view of their own little circle, and will be led into a wider interest and a world-sympathy as they learn of the self-sacrifice and heroism of Christianity's greatest and noblest missionaries. For these reasons and because the educational function belongs to the Sunday school, the latter should see that missions be given its normal and proper place in the work of the school.

4. **The missionary committee.** If a definite missionary policy in the school is purposed, the very first requisite is a well qualified missionary committee. The members should be selected by the superintendent from among those who are genuinely and intelligently interested in missionary work and in the cause. Otherwise, the committee will be useless. The committee should formulate a missionary policy, plan missionary programs at intervals, encourage a prayerful interest in missions, and encourage missionary giving in the Sunday school.

5. **Methods.** The object before the missionary committee is to get the subject of missions before the school in a manner both attractive, convincing and effective. This is not always easily done, especially if there are many who are prejudiced against the cause. But since missionary education is so essential, and, indeed, vital to the spiritual life and usefulness of the Church, some means suited to local conditions should be found.

Mr. Trull, in his helpful volume on "Missionary Methods," suggests **four general methods** for missionary instruction, as follows :

* Trull : "Missionary Methods," p. 1.

(1) **The interpretative method,** by which the missionary passages in the Bible are taken and given their natural missionary interpretation and application. "The Bible is a missionary book, and therein are found the missionary principles in which every school must be thoroughly grounded."

(2) **The illustrative method,** which is the use of missionary biography, incident and story, to illustrate the regular Sunday school lesson. There is a wealth of material within easy reach, in the current missionary periodicals and books, which the teachers or superintendent may use effectively.

(3) **The supplemental method,** which "makes the missionary lesson supplemental to the Bible lesson for the day, in no sense displacing it." The missionary committee should provide the course in supplemental work, for which a brief period of ten or fifteen minutes, taken once a month, or oftener if desired, may be given.

(4) **The substitutional method,** which "substitutes a missionary esson for the regular lesson for the day. This plan is followed by some schools once a quarter; on review Sunday, or some other, a special missionary program or lesson being used." Some schools pursue regularly the study of a **missionary text-book.**

These methods have been used successfully in numerous schools. The first and easiest method by which to begin such missionary instruction, is from the **platform** by the superintendent, or pastor, or some other person designated for the purpose. Ultimately, the best method, from the standpoint of religious culture, is that of instruction in the **class.** Clearly, the great difficulty with the latter method is that of securing a corps of teachers all of whom will be in hearty sympathy with the missionary cause, and thus qualified to present it effectively. A Sunday school should not be satisfied until it has such a body of teachers.

It is often a good plan to aim to get each class interested in some particular mission field or missionary, either in their giving or their mission study, or both. This makes the interest more permanent.

The **missionary committee** should make use of methods like those suggested, or those of their own invention, taking care to prepare interesting programs, and to make effective use of missionary maps, charts, diagrams, literature, etc.

6. **Objects.** The missionary policy of any Sunday school should aim at certain definite objects:

(1) To cultivate the sense of **personal obligation** to the missionary enterprise for the evangelization of the world. (Rom. 1 : 14.)

(2) To develop the **missionary spirit** and awaken the "**missionary passion**" in the souls of young and old. (Acts 26:29.)

(3) Thus to create the **missionary atmosphere** in the school.

(4) To give definite and concrete **information** as to the mission fields and the progress of evangelization. The story of the "Miracles of Modern Missions" will prove inspiring.

(5) Thus to awaken sustained **enthusiasm** for missions.

(6) To accustom the members of the school to give their missions and their missionaries a place in their **prayers.** (1 Thess. 5:25.)

(7) To encourage the habit of **systematic and proportionate giving** to missions. (Deut. 16:16, 17.) In some schools the giving is systematized by classes; in others, offerings by the school at intervals are the rule.

(8) To encourage some to consecrate themselves to **missionary service** in the foreign field.

7. **Result.** A fervent missionary spirit in the Sunday school will prove a great factor in the Christian nurture of the young. They will not only be Christians, but they will develop into the noblest type of Christian men and women, those with a missionary love for the world, for which Christ died. Their lives will be the purer and more unselfish, because their energies have been directed into channels of consecrated and far-reaching service for Christ and His kingdom.

QUESTIONS

1. Is the final purpose of the Sunday school the missionary enterprise?
2. What is the Sunday school's duty to the cause of missions?
3. What will a missionary policy in the school include?
4. What is the relation of missionary instruction to child-nurture?
5. Is a missionary committee desirable or necessary?
6. What are the duties of the missionary committee?
7. What is the interpretative method of missionary instruction?
8. What is the illustrative method?
9. What is the supplemental method?
10. What is the substitutional method?
11. Should instruction be given from the platform or in the class?
12. Can you suggest any other useful methods?
13. Name some definite objects of a missionary policy in the Sunday school.
14. What effect of missionary education upon child-nurture may reasonably be expected?

LESSON VIII

Christian Giving

1. **What is it? Christian giving** is the offering of our money to the Lord's work, including the support of the Church, missions, Christian charities, etc. It is especially Christian when our offerings are brought because of love to Christ and gratitude to God. To give thus to benevolence and to the Church is both an obligation and a privilege which we should recognize freely and gladly.

2. **Training in giving is necessary to the religious nurture of the child.** Indeed, Christian giving is a valuable factor in the development of symmetrical Christian character in young and old. **Knowledge** of the Lord's work awakens interest; **interest** in the Lord's work awakens **benevolence**; it follows that the interested child should be given the opportunity for the expression of his interest by gifts of money.

The awakened interest in missions and the Church should be made **fruitful** in personal service. Otherwise it is dead. Therefore the home, Church and Sunday school should cooperate in training the child to **give his offerings to the Lord.** This is essential, "not merely because of the actual need for the money, but because of his need to give it for the development of his own character. The sense of stewardship should be early instilled in the child's mind. Salvation is perfectly free—purchased, however, at the cost of the life-blood of the Son of God; but the gospel, which is the proclamation of salvation, costs money, always has and always will."—*Trull.* The failure to learn these lessons is one cause of selfish character and of the deficits in the treasuries of congregations and Church Boards.

3. **Primary principles of giving.**

(1) Giving to the Lord's work is an **act of worship** just as much as the act of prayer or song or reading the word. The Scriptures make this plain. (Prov. 3 : 9, 10.) The act of giving offerings should never be treated jestingly, for as an act of worship it manifests the worshiper's love to Christ and the Church and brings the divine blessing. (Luke 6 : 38.)

(2) Giving is according to **God's command.** Upon the people of Israel He laid the obligation to give. (Ex. 35 : 4-9; Mal. 3 : 10.) Christ continued the command. (Matt. 10 : 8; Luke 6 : 38.)

(3) **Gratitude** requires us to give to Christ. God has given His Son for our salvation with the blessings of time and eternity. We should manifest our gratitude. (John 10 : 11 ; 2 Cor. 8 : 9 ; Acts 20 : 35.)

(4) We should give **cheerfully, gladly,** and out of love to Christ. The niggardly gift brings no reflex blessing. (2 Cor. 9 : 7.)

4. **The blessings of giving.** The Christian's gifts carry blessing through the home work of the Church, in charities and by missions. On the other hand, the giver is richly blessed both in temporal things and in spiritual things. There is joy in giving to God, while the Christian qualities of love, sympathy, unselfishness, kindness and helpfulness are fostered and developed. (Acts 20 : 35 ; Ps. 41 : 1, 2 ; 37 : 3 ; Mal. 3 : 10 ; Luke 6 : 38.) Failure to give means loss. (Prov. 11 : 24.)

5. **Methods of giving.** St. Paul calls for method in our giving when he says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him." (1 Cor. 16 : 2.) Therefore our giving should be individual, systematic and proportionate.—*Trull.**

(1) **Individual giving.** "Every one of you," says Paul. The prevalent custom of the father subscribing and giving to benevolence and the support of the Church for the entire family is a mistake, for it withholds from the child the agency of spiritual culture. Every member of the family, adult or child, should be taught to give to the Lord. In the Sunday school the effort should be made to secure offerings from every child, and in the church all the confirmed children as well as their parents should be led to give regularly to the current expenses and benevolences. Even the poorest can give a little, and God expects it from them as well as from the rich. (Mark 12 : 42.)

(2) **Systematic and regular giving.** Paul says, "On the first day of the week." Too much of the giving of Christian people is at the dictate of impulse or inclination, without any order. It is too spasmodic, with the result that some of it is unwise, the giver is unable to give to some worthy and important causes for which he should have been prepared, and, in the end, he has not given enough to the Lord's work. Let him have a system and give regularly. God has established the most perfect system throughout His universe ; our daily lives are governed by system—our eating, sleeping, working—why not system also in our Christian giving and service? Let each one have a "Lord's treasury" and "lay by him in store." Then we could give more and do it intelligently.

* "Missionary Methods," p. 81.

(3) **Proportionate giving.** Paul adds, "As God hath prospered him"; that is, in proportion to what a man has. Some people gave pennies when they were children and continue to give pennies when they are grown up. That may be systematic giving, but it is not proportionate; neither is it just or right or scriptural.

Give to the Lord in **definite proportion** to the means with which He has blessed you. Many advocate tithing, the giving of the tenth of the income, according to the Old Testament law. (Deut. 12:6; 26:12; Mal. 3:10.) Much can be said for this system. While, perhaps, the very poor could not give the tenth, it should be the minimum of giving for most people, and many should give far more than the tenth. At least some fair portion of our means, considered and determined prayerfully, should be set apart for the Lord. (2 Cor. 8:12.)

6. **Cultivate the habit of giving.** Some habits are to be avoided as harmful, including stinginess. But the grace of giving is not one of these, for it is rich in blessing (2 Cor. 9:6), and should be fostered (2 Cor. 8:7). Especially important is it to plant the habit early in the children; then in their years of maturity they will more likely be liberal and cheerful givers. Teach them, everyone, to give regularly and systematically and to consider it one of the privileges and joys of the Christian life to help on the blessed work of the Master's kingdom.

7. **Direct giving to definite objects.** Our giving should be intelligent; therefore we should know to what we are giving, and why. Giving is usually proportionate to interest, and interest is proportionate to the information and knowledge of the object proposed. It is important, therefore, that all should clearly understand the nature of the causes which claim their offerings. We should not ask anyone, much less children, to give blindly or in a general way to "the Church" or to "benevolence." Thus, the educative effect is lost.

If subscriptions and offerings are asked for Church support **explain the purpose and need.** If it is an appeal for offerings for the Board of Foreign Missions or that of Home Missions, describe the work, and do it interestingly and with a general enthusiasm for the great enterprise of missions. So also with any other benevolent object, such as the orphan work, etc., which may appeal. Giving directly to definite objects on the great festival days of the Church and in response to the calls of the various Church Boards possesses a positive educational value in the religious nurture of the child.

It is helpful for Sunday school classes or church organizations to have before them some special object in the mission field, or elsewhere, in order to specialize their giving and their interest. It has

been found a very good plan often for a Sunday school class to have its own treasurer, who shall gather and pay out the regular offerings of the class for benevolence or other objects.

8. **Systematic giving should be directed through one's own Church and its agencies.** A man's first thought naturally is for his own—his family, his business, his country, his Church. Your own denomination is **your** Church. You are a part of it and owe the debt of steadfast loyalty. Such loyalty requires that the Christian should give his gifts first of all through his own Church's channels, whether of missions, education, charitable institutions, etc., or local objects. Haphazard giving is demoralizing to system, and no congregation or denomination could maintain its work by such means. The wisest and most effective giving is that which supports the regularly authorized and well organized agencies of one's own denomination. Before you respond to outside objects, no matter how deserving, see that you are doing your duty and meeting your obligation to your own Church. (1 Tim. 5 : 8.)

QUESTIONS

1. What is meant by Christian giving?
2. Why is training in giving necessary to the religious nurture of the child?
3. What are the principles of Christian giving?
4. Is giving to the Lord an act of worship?
5. Does giving bring blessing?
6. Ought everyone give to the Lord's work?
7. Should there be system in our giving?
8. What is meant by proportionate giving?
9. Is there benefit in making giving a habit?
10. Why should our giving be direct and definite?
11. What educational value is there in definite giving?
12. Should our systematic giving be through our own Church channels? Why?

LESSON IX

Christian Nurture by Work and Service

1. **The tree and its fruit.** It is the nature of the apple-tree to bear fruit. It is expected, therefore, that it should be fruitful. If it is not, we know something is wrong either with the tree or its surrounding conditions. It is the nature of the Christian to bear spiritual fruit. It is expected, therefore, that a professed Christian faith should be fruitful in Christian work and devoted service. If it is not, something is wrong. "Faith without works is dead." (James 2 : 17, 26; Matt. 3 : 8.)

Fruitfulness is a sign of health in both the natural and spiritual worlds. Even more, continued fidelity in the service of Christ and the work of the Church is a certain and blessed **means of spiritual nurture** in the Christian. Faithful Christian activity enlarges the spiritual vision, awakens a deeper love for Christ and a more intelligent sympathy for humanity, establishes and strengthens faith, increases courage, and gives an abiding joy in the consciousness of good done in the service of God.

2. **The immediate duty of a young Christian is to find work.** Work is necessary to life. "The sooner you get into some line of Christian work the better. If a drone ever gets to heaven, he will not feel at home there among the bees who have brought home the honey." —*Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler.* The Lord commands, "Go work to-day in my vineyard." (Matt. 21 : 28) No one is excused from this duty. The first thing, therefore, a young Christian should do, is to ask, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" (Acts 9 : 6.) Whoever seeks for something to do for Christ will be sure to find it.

3. **The Christian life is a life of service.** In our day, the word "**service**" has come to have a broader and nobler meaning than ever before. It includes everything a Christian can do and ought to do for the glory of God, the advancement of His kingdom and the welfare of mankind. The persistent call of the word of God is for service. (Deut. 10 : 12; Joshua 24 : 14, 15; 1 Thess. 1 : 9.)

Christ's life was a life of service crowned by His supreme service of redemption. He came "**to minister**" or serve. (Matt. 20 : 28.) When He washed His disciples' feet, He taught them and us the duty

and beauty of humble service. (John 13 : 14, 15.) As Jesus went about doing good, so everyone who would walk in "His steps" should strive to do all the good for which he can find opportunity. (Heb. 13 : 16.)

4. **The Church a place to work.** The Church offers a ready and open field for Christian work and service. We quote at length from Dr. Hott : * "Every person coming into the Church of Christ comes there to work for the Master. The Church is not a mere hospital where we are to be nursed, but a vineyard, where all are to find employment. The Church is not a hive of drones, but a hive of busy workers. The work of the Church is well understood in all its claims. It has two forms. The first has respect to the maintenance of the Church in all its material and organic interests ; in this department we contribute our efforts to sustain the church with which we are connected. The other is personal and direct work for the salvation of those who are away from Christ. In both of these departments of endeavor, every young Christian should early take his or her place. . . .

"In the regular work of the Church and in sustaining the Church, these facts should be remembered :

"(1) Everyone ought to have **something to do.**

"(2) The duties of the Church should take **precedence** of other business.

"(3) Every assignment of the Church should be accepted as the **appointment of God,** and its duty performed as in the loving fear of God.

"(4) The member of the Church that does not in some way help, even though it be in a feeble degree, in the work of the Church, should count his or her Christian life a failure, and begin anew the blessed service. The Church services and societies and Sunday schools and care for the poor, all furnish abundant fields for contributions and effort."

5. **Personal work for souls.** This is one kind of work a Christian may do for Jesus. Two pressing facts confront him ; the one, that all about him are great numbers of souls who are "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel," and lost in indifference and sin ; the other, that to him belong the privilege and the opportunity of attempting to lead some of them back to Christ. Every young Christian should aim early in his experience and service, to bring at least one soul to Christ and into the Church and kingdom, every year, and more if possible. Let him invite persons to the services of worship in the house of God ;

* "Sacred Hours With Young Christians," p. 135.

let him speak a word kindly and tactfully on the subject of their salvation; and especially let him pray for them. To win a soul for Christ is one of the deepest joys a Christian can have.

6. **Young people's work.** The field of the young people's societies in the Church is an opportunity for work and service which every young Christian should embrace. These societies—**Luther League, Christian Endeavor,** etc.—have been of great value in training the young people of this generation for Christian service. Not only will the young Christian find there opportunity of doing work for Christ and the Church, but he will find also direct benefit for himself, in the practical experience he gains. If he enters earnestly into the work, he will learn to offer prayer in public and to bear spoken witness for Christ, thereby deepening his own spiritual life and character. Let him by all means avail himself of these privileges, not only for the good he may do, but also for the religious culture he may himself receive.

7. **Sunday school work.** Every Christian should be in the Sunday school, and especially every young Christian, for there he will find abundant opportunities for service if he keep his eyes open and his hand ready. He will receive instruction, but he may gain as much more in increasing strength of character by doing work for Christ. Every member of the Bible school should feel his personal responsibility toward maintaining the work and efficiency of the school. To this end, let him be faithful himself and also invite others to come with him; let him do whatsoever his hand findeth to do. He will do good, and in doing good will be a better Christian himself.

8. **Other lines of work.** There are numerous other lines of Christian work within and without the Church, which will not only open avenues of useful service to the young Christian, but will also prove the means of securing instruction, with a larger experience of the value of Christian character and faith, and of increasing strength and wisdom. One of these lines is that of **Christian missions,** of which we have spoken in Lesson VII. It will be of great value to our young people early to take an interest in the world-wide missionary enterprise, and to have some part in the work of the local missionary societies. While they gain a clearer apprehension of God's purpose of redemption for mankind, they will be inspired by a growing sense of Christian responsibility and world-wide obligation.

Another line of practical Christian activity is that of work for **temperance** and **against the liquor traffic** and the **saloon.** Intemperance and the liquor traffic are terrible evils, and are the prolific sources of misery, crime, sin and political corruption. The Christian as a good

soldier of Jesus Christ, must war against them, having put on his spiritual armor, and having made himself a total abstainer from intoxicating drinks. By logical necessity he must be the enemy of the saloon, for the latter is continually undoing the work which the Church and gospel are trying to accomplish. Let him, therefore, work for temperance and against the liquor traffic.

There are other **Christian reforms,** such as **Sabbath observance,** etc., for which the young Christian may properly work, and in which he should take an interest.

9. **Self-denial and sacrifice** are necessary principles of the Christian life. (Matt. 16 : 24, 25.) The Christian is not in the world to serve himself alone and first, but he is called to serve the will of God, and to serve others. (Luke 10 : 27.) "There are just two steps in religion ; the first is out of self ; the second is into Christ. They must be taken in their true order. The spirit of self-denial is essential to a possession of a deep and satisfactory experience in the love and fellowship of Christ."—*Hott.* The believer, like his Master, should be here and in the Church, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

10. **Reward and blessing.** The service of God necessitates much self-denial, but it is rich in its compensations, spiritual and otherwise. "A working Christian man can never be wretched. He gathers his sheaves as he goes."—*Dr. Cuyler.* He sees the fruits of his service and rejoices. He gains a deep and abiding satisfaction of soul in doing good, while the kingdom of God becomes ever more and more a nearer and surer reality to him. As he serves his Lord loyally, trustingly and with self-denial, Christ will become dearer to him, he will grow in strength and beauty of character, he will gain in the power to discern spiritual things, and the inner life of the soul will blossom to the fullness of maturity. And with it all he will come to experience for himself the meaning of Paul's words, "for to me to live is Christ."

The young disciple can find no better means of promoting **spiritual nurture and enrichment** than to walk in the way of practical Christian work and service. There he will have sufficient reward and blessing in the fellowship of the Lord Christ.

QUESTIONS

1. Is fruit to be expected of a Christian life ?
2. What is the immediate duty of a young Christian ?
3. What is the meaning of "service" in its Christian sense ?
4. Is the Church a place for ease or work ?

5. Name some principles which should govern our Christian service.

6. What is the value of personal work for souls?

7. What are the benefits of work in young people's societies?

8. Are we under obligation to work in the Sunday school?

9. What other lines of service are helpful?

10. What are necessary principles of the Christian life?

11. What effect have Christian work and service upon the religious nurture of the young believer?

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